

SERBIA'S PART IN THE WAR

VOL. I.

THE RAMPART AGAINST
PAN-GERMANISM

CRAWFURD PRICE

SERBIA'S PART IN THE WAR

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H.R.H. THE PRINCE REGENT ALEXANDER,
Commander-in-Chief of the Serbian Army.

[Frontispiece

SERBIA'S PART IN THE WAR

Vol. I

THE RAMPART AGAINST PAN-GERMANISM

Being the Political and Military Story of the
Austro-Serbian Campaigns

BY

CRAWFURD PRICE

FORMERLY CORRESPONDENT OF "THE TIMES" WITH THE SERBIAN ARMY

Author of "The Balkan Cockpit," "Light on the Balkan
Darkness," "Venizelos and the War," etc.

WITH SPECIALLY DRAWN MAPS TO ILLUSTRATE THE THREE
AUSTRIAN INVASIONS AND THE EXPEDITION INTO SYRMIA

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON,
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“What I ventured to say about Belgium, speaking on behalf of the British Government, I say here again, speaking on behalf of the same Government, about Serbia. The first condition of peace is restoration, complete and without reservation. I came here to make no speech. I came here to say that, however long this war may last, British honour is involved in seeing that Serbian independence is completely restored. It is not merely a matter of honour. It is a matter of the security of civilization. What is true about Belgium, the warden of the gateway in the West, is equally true about Serbia in the East. She is the guardian of the gate, and faithfully has she stood to her trust. She has suffered. She had two glorious campaigns, yea, a third, for with her own right hand she defeated the legions of Austria, and had it not been for the overwhelming masses of the Central Powers that attacked her, she would have still kept the gate. But her gallant troops in the hour of defeat have never been broken-hearted. On the contrary, the remnant of her army gathered together—men came from the East and the West, with Serbian blood in their veins and their hearts throbbing with pride in the traditions of their people—and they are still at the door, watching. One day they will win through and will regain their independence. In the name of the men of British blood who are here, we extend once more the hand of fellowship to Serbia, and we say: ‘Come weal, come woe; we are not merely friends, but Allies and partners, and we will work together to the end.’”—*The Right Hon. D. Lloyd George, M.P., on August 8th, 1917.*

PREFACE

STRIPPED of all considerations of Right and Wrong, Autocracy and Democracy, Freedom and Slavery, this greatest of all wars is the consequence of a German bid for world conquest, conspired by a force which we name "Prussian Militarism. The ambition finds political expression in the doctrine of "Pan-Germanism," a term which, for purposes of argument, may be accepted as covering the openly annexationist schemes fathered by Tannenberg, Reventlow, and others, and the more insidious proposals (known as *Mittel Europa*) of which Friedrich Naumann is the chief apostle. Both seek to attain much the same end by different methods of expansion.

The successful execution of either programme entails the control of all territory served by the Berlin-Baghdad Railway, and the absolute domination of the Balkan States—a purpose to which the policy of the Central Powers has been directed for many years. The Danubian Empire has long been a mere tool of the Prussian conspirators, and will so remain until its inevitable disintegration sets in. The Turkey of Abdul Hamid fell an early victim to German guile, while astute diplomacy speedily triumphed over the set-back received on the occasion of the Young Turk Revolution. And Bulgaria, blinded to her real interests by jealousy and avarice, has been dancing to the Teuton fiddle since the summer of 1913.

Thus, in 1914, Serbia was the one break in the chain of alliances and understandings that stretched from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf. She alone stood between the Central Empires and the realisation of Pan-German aspirations, and it was accordingly decreed that the chance crime of Sarajevo should be used as a pretext for her undoing. Had Serbia been left to her own resources, the Great War might have been delayed ; but it would surely have been fought out at a future date in circumstances much less favourable for democracy.

To talk of compromise in the Balkans is to parley with defeat. The Peninsula will necessarily become either a rampart against Pan-Germanism, or a bridge over which it will pass to Turkey and future conquests in Asia and Africa. Restore Anglo-French influence, strengthen the little countries which have made common cause with the Grand Alliance, and Pan-Germanism will cease to menace the peace of the world. Permit Teuton domination to remain, and few obstacles will stand in the way of the execution of the Prussian programme in its entirety.

The restoration and aggrandisement of the Serbian Kingdom is essentially a concern of British Imperial politics, for it lies athwart the great railway which will ultimately link up Berlin with the Persian Gulf and the Suez Canal. A strong Serbian barrier will protect India and Egypt against German aggression, and destroy the Teuton *mainmise* on Bulgaria and Turkey. It is not too much to say that the measure of the future Serbian State will be the measure of our victory in the war.

It is the purpose of this volume to record the manner in which the Serbian Army "kept the gate." The accounts of the military operations have been compiled from my own notes, the information culled from individual units, and the details and army orders placed at my disposal by the Serbian General Staff. I have thus been enabled to produce an authentic, and, I hope, interesting history of the Austro-Serbian campaigns. The comments and criticisms are my own.

In thanking the Serbian authorities for their consideration, I would also express my indebtedness to the proprietors of the *Times* for permission to draw on my contributions to their publications, and to my publishers for acceding to my request that this book should be issued at a popular price.

It remains for me to add that my spelling of Serbian place names has been governed by no hard-and-fast rules. I have simply endeavoured to render into English the native pronunciation.

C. P.

LONDON,
December, 1917.

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PART I

THE DAWN OF ARMAGEDDON

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PART I

THE DAWN OF ARMAGEDDON

OR

"THE PROVOCATION BY SERBIA"

(*Vide German Note to Neutrals,
January 11th, 1917.*)

THE history of Austro-Serbian relations is the record of a prolonged struggle between the forces of autocracy and democracy, oppression and freedom. It is a story of the desire of an organised despotism, at once sensible of its vulnerability and consumed by the lust for territorial expansion, to ride rough-shod over the liberties and rights of the weak within, and to crush the development and independence of the small without.

The Austro-Hungarian ultimatum of July 23rd, 1914, was the last challenge to Serbia to choose between vassalage and annihilation; it was the culmination of a determination, by fair means or foul, to break the national spirit of the Serbs or trample them out of existence as an independent people; it was a final effort to destroy the rampart which the Serbian renaissance had built up between Berlin and Baghdad and between Vienna and Salonika.

When Metternich declared that "Serbia must be either Turkish or Austrian," he implied that Austria was content that Turkey should hold the principedom (as it was then) in pawn for the Habsburgs, but that she would never tolerate Serbian independence. Here we have the keynote of the policy which the Dual Monarchy followed with remarkable persistence down to July 1914, and the

explanation of the important fact that, whenever the Serbian throne was occupied by a ruler who set in the forefront of his programme the development of the State and the unification of the race, he incurred, *ipso facto*, the active enmity and powerful opposition of Austria-Hungary.

With a view to simplicity of explanation, it is advantageous to divide the history of Austro-Serbian pre-war relations into three periods :

- (1) From the Serbian revolution to the Berlin Congress (1878).
- (2) From the Berlin Congress to the accession of King Peter (1903).
- (3) From 1903 to 1914.

Similarly, it is necessary to draw attention to the four distinct methods employed by Austria-Hungary to obtain a stranglehold upon Serbia. These were :

- (a) Commercial and economic pressure.
- (b) The corruption of Serbian rulers.
- (c) The suppression of Yugo-Slav nationalism in the Monarchy.
- (d) The threat of military action against the Serbian State.

THE FIRST PERIOD

The first phase of Serbia's struggle for independence (against Turkey) commenced in 1804, when Karageorge, the ancestor of King Peter, raised the standard of liberty in the Shoumadia. Though the battle of Michar (August 13th, 1806) really gave birth to the new Serbian principality, the early stage of the contest between Turk and Serb continued with varying fortune until 1813, when Karageorge was defeated and obliged to take refuge across the frontier. The Serbian question had by this time already taken on a European character, and the assistance rendered to the Porte by Vienna was rewarded by a costly present, the gift of the Sultan to the Austrian Ambassador.

At a later date (1843) when Serbia, then in enjoyment of autonomy, but still subject to the régime of the Commercial Treaties concluded by the Ottoman Government (according to which all imports paid a toll of 8 per cent. *ad val.*) sought authority to make her own fiscal arrangements, her efforts, undertaken with the consent of the Porte, were successfully opposed by Austria at Beograd (Belgrade) and Constantinople, on the ground that, "Serbia being a Turkish province, she could not commit an act of autonomy in external affairs."

Again, in 1862, when, after the Turkish troops stationed in the citadel of Beograd (Belgrade) had bombarded the defenceless town for five hours, France and Russia demanded the withdrawal of the Ottoman garrison, Austria opposed the evacuation because she feared the effect that would be produced upon her own Southern Slav subjects. For this further service to the Porte she was rewarded with a reduction of the Serbian tariff to 5 per cent.—a concession which placed her in a privileged position and gave her control of the Serbian market.

These selections from a mass of available evidence will, perhaps, suffice to demonstrate that during the early phase of the regeneration of the Balkan States, Christian Austria, for sordid political motives, actually conspired with Mohammedan Turkey to render abortive Serbia's attempt to win her own freedom and strike a telling blow for the Cross against the Crescent. Yet, crushed as it was between the millstones of Austria and Turkey, the cause of liberty grew and flourished in Serbia. Under the wise guidance of Prince Michel (1860) notable progress was registered, and ideas of Yugo-Slav union spread over the land from the Drave to the Rhodopes, and from the Adriatic to the Black Sea.

During the eight years of his reign, Prince Michel laid the foundations of a Balkan League, and his plans were nigh unto fruition when, on June 10th, 1868, he was brutally murdered at Beograd (Belgrade). Austro-Hungarian diplomacy has never cleared itself of complicity in this crime, and the suspicion that its hired assassins fired the fatal shots is heightened by the fact that his death made way for the accession of Prince Milan, a renegade

monarch who soon fell under the influence of the Habsburgs, seriously compromised the finances of his country, and brought much discredit on the nation by his unkingly conduct.

The intrigues worked by the Monarchy through the instrumentality of Milan proved fatal to the cause of Southern Slav unity for generations. Not only did the era of corruption and misgovernment which he inaugurated in Serbia unfit the army to render any effective support to the Bosnian Serbs during their revolution (1875-6), but, what was perhaps infinitely more important, he earned the displeasure of Russia. Partly on this account, Austro-Hungarian diplomacy (ably supported by Bismarck, who thus early regarded the Habsburg Empire as the advance-guard of Germany in the Orient) succeeded in depriving the Bosnians of the Tzar's assistance, and at the Conference of Reichstadt (July 1876) Count Andrassy secured a formal promise that under no circumstances would Serbia be permitted to acquire the territories of Dalmatia, Slavonia, and Croatia. Austria-Hungary thereby registered a notable diplomatic victory, for by this essential error Russia abandoned the Serbs to Habsburg influence. In revenge, she set herself thenceforward to create a powerful Bulgaria as her own outpost in the Peninsula, and laid the foundation of one aspect of the troublesome Balkan question of to-day.

So it came to pass that, although Serbia rendered Russia important assistance in the Russo-Turkish War (1878) the Tzar sought to create the "Big" Bulgaria (Treaty of San Stefano), which englobed not merely the territories actually inhabited by Bulgars, but any other part of the Peninsula to which the Slav race might in the future be able to put forward any sort of claim. And when the Powers called a Congress, Serbia went to Berlin discredited and alone. She was abandoned by Russia, ignored by England and Germany, and forced to rely upon such support as Austria-Hungary might deem fit to accord her. The question of vital moment for Serbia, the future of Bosnia and Hertzegovina, had actually been settled by a secret convention between Austria and England before the Conference opened its deliberations,

and that understanding was embodied in the Treaty in the form of a declaration that the Provinces should be occupied and administered by Austria-Hungary. Austria was also accorded liberty to garrison the Sandjak of Novi-Bazaar, while a further Convention between Austria and Russia engaged the Tzar to offer no objection if, as a result of any inconvenience arising from the continuation of Turkish administration in the Sandjak, Austria-Hungary decided to occupy it definitely along with Bosnia.

The Congress of Berlin marked for Austria-Hungary a distinct step in the subjugation of Serbia. She succeeded in land-locking her little neighbour, and in so limiting the "Big" Bulgaria planned by Russia that, south of Serbia, Turkey remained in provisional occupation and the way remained clear for the Dual Monarchy to continue its penetration towards Salonika.

True, Austria obtained for Serbia certain advantages. She was finally liberated from Turkey, and received the districts of Nish, Pirot, Vrania, and Leshkovatz (all of them necessary to the Monarchy's contemplated descent to the *Ægean*!), and Milan was elevated to the rank of kingship. But the favours were dearly bought. From the Austrian point of view, it was merely an affair of stuffing the pig in preparation for the banquet. Milan himself became a well-paid vassal. He persistently favoured the Austrians to the detriment of his own subjects, and declared Pan-Slavism to be the enemy of Serbia. Austrian soldiers mapped out the country and sat on the General Staff. Nor was this all—Austro-Hungarian diplomacy gave much consideration to the advantages of commercial and economic penetration as a means to political control. In other words, it sought to achieve political domination by strengthening its hold on the Serbian markets to the exclusion of other States, and thus virtually reducing Serbia to the position of an Austrian colony.

THE SECOND PERIOD

Austria-Hungary opened the second period of her relations with the quasi-independent Serbian State by an

attempt to force a Customs Union upon it. She had every reason to anticipate an easy success. As we have seen, she had rid herself of the danger of Russian interference, and virtually secured possession of Bosnia-Hertzegovina; King Milan was her servant; she had taken the kingdom under her wing at Berlin, and the moment was apparently favourable for its reduction to a condition of vassalage. Had the Habsburgs taken a leaf from the history of British colonial administration and admitted the Serbs to the Empire on an equal footing with Germans and Magyars, the whole future development of European politics might have been altered; but the two most powerful elements in the Monarchy were animated by other objects. They sought, not equality, but domination, and the principle of self-government was entirely foreign to the ideas which ruled at Vienna and Budapest.

The Serbs had been tragically humiliated, yet the national spirit survived the ordeal, and when the proposal of a Customs Union was put forward it broke down before the opposition of the Skoupshtina. But Count Andrassy was determined to persist with his plan, and on July 8th, 1878 (during the Berlin Congress) he imposed upon Serbia an *entente* which included the following conditions. Serbia was engaged:

- (1) To conclude a Treaty of Commerce with Austria-Hungary immediately after the Congress of Berlin, and to assure to the Monarchy special privileges in the form of "Commerce limitrophe."
- (2) To take steps with a view to a future Commercial Union with Austria-Hungary.

Perceiving in these stipulations a direct menace to their independence, the Serbs sought to evade the issue by arranging a Treaty of Commerce with England on the basis of the Most-Favoured-Nation clause. This provoked energetic protests from Vienna; the Cabinet of Dr. Ristitch was forced to resign, and the new Government, obliged to accept the demands in their entirety,

eventually concluded a treaty (1881) which embodied the Austrian desiderata.¹

The strength of the control thus secured by Austria-Hungary will be better appreciated by the examination of two clauses of the Treaty. The first concerned the arrangements for "commerce limitrophe." Under the conditions imposed, Austria succeeded in monopolising Serbia's export of cereals, fruit, and livestock, and, in return, secured great facilities for the introduction of her manufactures of paper, porcelain, glass, wood, and iron—that is to say, for such articles as she had reason to fear foreign competition or the development of local Serbian industry.

In effect, the Monarchy thus obtained the following advantages :

- (a) She limited Serbia's markets by drawing to herself 90 per cent. of the export and 80 per cent. of the import trade of the kingdom.
- (b) She stifled the recently inaugurated development of manufacturing industry in Serbia, and restricted her production to cereals, fruits and live-stock.
- (c) She popularised a belief that the loss of the Austrian market would be tantamount to a national calamity.

Another, and, in reality, the most important clause in the Treaty (*i.e.* that which gave to Serbia the right to export her live-stock to Austria-Hungary and to forward it in transit across that country) limited the circumstances

¹ Immediately following the proclamation of Serbian Independence at the Congress of Berlin, the Skoupstina was convoked at Nish to receive information concerning the decisions taken at the Congress and to vote the necessary laws in consequence. During the proceedings Dr. Ristitch advised the Assembly that, as the result of secret negotiations with the British Minister at Nish, a Treaty of Commerce had been concluded between the two States. This announcement provoked a storm of protest in the Austrian Reichstag, which took concrete form in the shape of an interpellation as to how this "miserable State" (*winziger Staat*) had dared to conduct itself in such fashion *vis-à-vis* Austria-Hungary. The Serbian Government was openly menaced by Vienna, and, as a result, the Liberals fell from power and gave place to the Progressists, who decided in favour of complete submission and forthwith concluded a Treaty of Commerce with the Monarchy.

under which the frontier could be closed to transport (in cases of epidemic), the supposed object being to assure Serbia against arbitrary action in this respect. Instead of a safe-guard for Serbia, however, the clause became a powerful weapon in the hands of Austria-Hungary whenever she desired to attain any political objects in the neighbouring kingdom. During the existence of the Treaty (1882-1905) Austria-Hungary closed the frontier on eleven occasions, on only two of which the Convention could be applied ; on the other nine occasions the motives were political !

All Serbia's attempts to throw off the shackles were in vain. Austria-Hungary held her northern and western frontiers, there was no market to the east, the passage of the Danube was closed by the tax-barrier erected by Austria-Hungary at the Iron Gate, and the route to Salonika lay over the line of the Oriental Railway Company, a concern under the direct influence of Vienna. The Habsburgs had indeed manœuvred with considerable success, and, thanks to the assistance of their servile confederate, the Serbian king, they proceeded to drive home the initial advantage. Milan had always need of money wherewith to support his life of vicious luxury and satisfy the demands of his corrupt partisans, and, almost simultaneously with the loss of fiscal liberty, he signed away his country's political birthright for a mess of Austrian gold. In order to stifle opposition to his nefarious practices, he made a mockery of the Constitution, and in 1881 entered into a secret convention with Austria-Hungary (renewed in 1889) by which she was to assist the extension of Serbia in the Vardar Valley ; Serbia, on her part, was never to tolerate a Serbian propaganda in the Austrian Yugo-Slav provinces, and, in case of war, was to open the fortresses of Beograd and Nish to Austrian troops. The policy of the Dual Monarchy now appears before us stripped of all its hypocrisy. She had secured economic control of Serbia, she had the King in her pay, and, thus assured of Serbian vassalage, she was ready to use her as a pioneer to open the road to Salonika, and to strengthen her so that she could thereby be used as an instrument to weaken Bulgaria, a State

which Vienna then regarded as the tool of Russia in the Balkans.

Four years later the occasion arose. On receipt of the news of the Bulgarian revolution of 1885, which had for its object union with Eastern Roumelia, Austria called upon Milan to oppose this threatened expansion of his neighbour. Faithful to his paymasters, the King mobilised his army; but, under the sinister influence of the ruler, the fighting forces of Serbia had by this time degenerated into a disorganised, ill-equipped horde, led by officers who, the product of a corrupt régime, possessed confidence neither in themselves nor their cause. On November 16th, 1885, the Serbs invaded Bulgaria. Their progress was arrested at Tzaribrod, the Bulgars defeated them at Slivnitza, and marched on Nish. The catastrophe aroused a storm of protest against the dynasty, and there was a consensus of opinion in favour of the abdication of Milan; but, upon promises of support arriving from Austria, the King determined to fight on. The people, however, saw very clearly that they were simply being sacrificed in the interests of Austria, and they had little personal interest in an attempt to weaken a neighbour with whom they had no quarrel. Thus supported, the Skoupshtina was able to insist on the conclusion of peace on the basis of the *status quo ante bellum*.

In 1889 Milan abdicated in favour of his son Alexander, a young man who, in very truth, had little to recommend him. He inherited most all the vices of his father, under whose demoralising influence he remained after his accession, and it followed, almost as a matter of course, that the dynastic liaison with Austria continued to the exclusion of any movement towards a *rapprochement* with Russia. It is mere justice to suggest that Alexander was mentally irresponsible. He made the Constitution a plaything of his ever-changing fancy, imprisoned and exiled the mouthpieces of popular discontent, and culminated a series of outrages against the well-being of his people and the sanctity of his office by marrying Draga Machin, a woman of very unwholesome reputation whose *amours* were a scandal in the city of Beograd prior to her elevation to the queenship. The

Serbs are a proud people, and though they had suffered patiently the many humiliations which had been heaped upon them, this last insult roused them to action. A vast conspiracy against the monarch was organised, and the leaders, realising that they had to reckon with Austria as well as Alexander and his courtiers, determined on swift and drastic action, raided the Palace on the night of June 10th, 1903, and assassinated the King and his consort.

In this fashion Serbia not only rid herself of the Obrenovitch dynasty (Alexander was the last of his line) but also checkmated the carefully laid plans of Austria-Hungary to secure control of the country through the medium of the Austrophile rulers who had been so long tolerated out of respect for the law of succession and the services rendered by their ancestors.

THE THIRD PERIOD

The assassination of King Alexander, announcing as it did the end of the Austrian régime in Beograd, was a severe blow to the ambitions of Viennese diplomacy. But its effect was even more marked in Serbia. With the introduction of popular control, the old spirit that had so long languished under Milan and Alexander quickly revived, and there set in a general process of national regeneration which developed rapidly alongside the reorganisation of the army. Further, the return of the Karageorgevitch dynasty restored Russian influence, and the question of Southern Slav union became once more an important factor in Balkan politics.

While it is permissible to conclude that the Habsburgs were impatient to take the Serbian bull by the horns, respect for Russia doubtless persuaded them to proceed with caution. It was, therefore, fortunate for them that the old Austro-Serbian Commercial Treaty was due to expire in 1905, and this fact placed in their hands a pacific weapon of which they were not slow to avail themselves. Desiring now more than ever to seal their economic hold upon Serbia, the representatives of Austria-Hungary sought to withdraw the privileges hitherto

accorded to the little kingdom, while insisting upon the maintenance of their own. No immediate understanding resulted, for on this occasion they found themselves faced by a Government which was determined, in so far as it possessed the power, to safeguard the national interests.

In the meantime, there set in a movement in favour of a Serbo-Bulgarian *rapprochement*. True to the traditions of Prince Michel, the democratic Serbs were predisposed in favour of a Slav *entente* and failed to estimate correctly the motives which actuated this demonstration of Bulgarian friendliness. Consequently, the first overtures from Sofia were received with enthusiasm, and pourparlers were engaged upon with a view to the conclusion of a Customs Union. When this startling development reached Austrian ears, Serbo-Austrian negotiations were immediately broken off, and they remained in suspense until a further report that Serbia was treating with both the Vickers and Creusot factories in respect to a large order for artillery so alarmed the Ballplatz that it was decided to bring matters to a head without delay. The Austro-Hungarian Government thereupon refused to renew the Treaty of Commerce unless Serbia agreed to make all her State purchases in the Monarchy (this stipulation really meant that the cannon should be bought at Skoda), accepted financial assistance from the government-controlled Union Bank, and ended the negotiations with Bulgaria.

Austria doubtless believed that this threat of displeasure would bring Beograd to heel. But she reckoned without the Serbian renaissance. The Serbs had discovered themselves since their liberation from Austrophile despotism in 1903, and, under the leadership of a constitutional monarch, they made their first bid for commercial independence. The refusal to capitulate shocked Austria—so many years of willing tutelage had unfitted her for any sign of fight from across the Sava—and, with the conviction that Serbia would soon be reduced to submission and go cap in hand to Vienna to request a new treaty, ready to accept any and every condition, she broke off commercial relations, closed the frontier, and declared the famous Pig War (June 1906), simultaneously

massing large forces in Bosnia and along the northern frontier.

Austria could have rendered to Serbia no greater service. Faced with the closing of the Austro-Hungarian frontier, she was impelled to seek other markets. M. Pashitch¹ obtained from Parliament a credit destined to assist the search for new outlets, opened divers commercial agencies abroad, obtained a reduction in the freight to Salonika, secured a concession for the erection of stables and stock-sheds in that Ægean port, and signed numerous conventions with shipping companies for transport of Serbian produce to Egypt, Malta, Italy, and elsewhere. Thanks to this energetic statesmanship and the high prices ruling during this period, little loss was inflicted upon the Serbs during the five years over which the customs war extended.

Yet, despite this comparative success, the difficulties which had been temporarily overcome by the Government clearly exposed the weak points in Serbia's position, and the nation realised that the principal cause of its economic dependence upon Austria lay in the lack of communications. To reach any seaport, it was necessary to transport

¹ Nicholas Pashitch, one of the outstanding political figures of the world war, was born at Veliki Izvor, near Zaitchar (Eastern Serbia), in 1846, and at an early age proceeded to Zurich, where he qualified as an Engineer. In Switzerland he found himself amid a generation of Young Serbians animated by socialistic and revolutionary principles, and, speedily imbibing the democratic atmosphere of his environment, he played a foremost part in the organisation of the Radical (or Peasant) party. During this early period he may be said to have symbolised the political life of Serbia under the last two Obrenovitch kings. His first concern was to liberate the Serbs within the kingdom, and he was content to leave to a later date the freeing of his co-nationals under Turkish and Austrian rule. It may be added in parenthesis that it was precisely during the epoch when Serbia was struggling to obtain a truly constitutional régime, that the Bulgars, by means of a highly organised propaganda, made considerable progress in the superficial Bulgarisation of Central Macedonia.

In the year 1881 Pashitch was elected a member of the Serbian Skoupshtina in the Radical interest, and, once in the Chamber, organised a group which led the fight against autocracy in home politics and Austrophilism in foreign affairs. This programme inevitably brought him into sharp conflict with King Milan, and, following an anti-dynastic insurrection in the Timok province in 1883, he was compelled to fly the country and was condemned to death.

After six years spent in exile, Pashitch was amnestied, and, returning to Serbia, became successively President of the Skoupshtina, Premier (1891-2) and Serbian Minister at Petrograd (1893-4). In

the merchandise through either Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, or Turkey—a fact which entailed a certain dependence upon those countries, and this knowledge gave birth to a desire to ameliorate the geographical situation of the kingdom. There accordingly sprang up that agitation in favour of an outlet to the Adriatic which was destined to become one of the principal reasons for Serbia's participation in the first Balkan War.

The success which attended the Serbian bid for commercial freedom destroyed Austria's hope of conquering the country by pacific means, and there can be little doubt that the progress made in its reorganisation decided Vienna that resort must be made eventually to sterner measures. It had also been discovered that the Sandjak of Novi-Bazaar provided a poor route to the *Ægean*, and it was always to be remembered that, at the Berlin Congress, Ottoman sovereignty over Bosnia and Hertzegovina had been recognised and the Austro-Hungarian occupation therefore remained legally contestable. If Austria had needed any encouragement to make her occupation of Bosnia and Hertzegovina definite—other than the growing strength of Serbia—this was provided by

1899 he again fell under the royal displeasure, when, as the result of a charge of high treason preferred against the Radical Party, he was condemned to fifteen years in prison. He was once more pardoned, and in 1904 entered the Cabinet of Sava Grouitch as Foreign Minister. In 1906 he again formed a Cabinet, since which time, with a few brief interruptions, he has been either the titular head or the ruling spirit of a succession of Radical Governments.

Tall of stature and of patriarchal appearance, Pashitch was no doctrinaire or theoriser, but an essentially practical man distinguished for his moderation and organising ability. Simple and taciturn, he exercised a remarkable hold on the peasantry. A great patriot, neither threats of death nor actual imprisonment were able to detach him from his loyalty to the cause of Democracy or change his antagonism to the Obrenovitch régime and all its works.

In diplomacy he was an ardent Russophile and a partisan of a close understanding between the Balkan peoples. He had no professional training to aid him in his dealings with Foreign Representatives, but relied with manifest success upon his innate instinct and clairvoyance and his own good sense. He neither risked nor bluffed, but, with the stratagem of a practised diplomatist and the flexibility of one of ripe experience, he would patiently await the opportunity to carry his point. To these his natural gifts must be added a quick sense of impending danger, an almost feminine intuition, and, when occasion demanded, an invaluable ability to discuss a given subject at length without divulging his real opinion or intentions.

the Young Turk revolution, with its dreams of Ottoman restoration. It must also be remarked that there was proceeding simultaneously an evolution in Bulgarian policy, and that while Serbia, having thrown off the Austrian yoke, now looked to Russia for salvation, Bulgaria, under the guidance of the Coburg Prince, Ferdinand—a Magyar officer and noble—was drawing nearer to Austria. There had been, one may put it, a transference of allegiance on the part of the two States.

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As we approach that critical epoch in history when the Habsburg Government first presented Europe with the choice between a general conflagration and a furtherance of Pan-German ambition, it becomes necessary briefly to review the situation in Bosnia-Hertzegevina. Truth to tell, this had long been a cause for serious misgiving, for, side by side with the attempt to dragoon the kingdom of Serbia into submission, there had been carried on a definite campaign conducted with a view to crushing the Serbo-Croatian population in the monarchy and preventing it from realising its racial and linguistic unity with the Serbs of Serbia. When it is remembered that the Slav population of Austria-Hungary totalled no less than 50 per cent. of the whole, it will be obvious that the task of maintaining the Germans and Magyars in a dominating position was one of no mean difficulty. To this end, the Southern Slavs (seven and a half millions) were divided between Austria and Hungary and parcelled out into eleven different administrative sectors, and an attempt was made to Germanise or Magyarise them as the case might be.

Thus the population, although they had suffered much under the Turkish régime, had shown themselves in no mood to welcome the decision of the Berlin Congress. They were already sufficiently in touch with German and Magyar methods to anticipate that the alleged desire of Austria-Hungary to end the state of anarchy and oppression in which they had lived when the Crescent floated from their fortresses would merely place them under a new tyranny ; and in this they were not mistaken.

No honest effort was made to better their conditions, the iniquities of the feudal system survived the change of government, and in 1882 the universal unrest was manifested by a revolt which broke out in Northern Bosnia. The Government then, as always, proved itself much more capable and thorough in the suppression of protest against persecution than in its removal, and the rising was put down by the customary blood-and-iron methods, which were followed by a veritable reign of terror.

But the fire of liberty had taken too great a hold in the land to be snuffed out even by a combination of hangman's rope, prison cells, and cruel repression, and there sprang up a demand for provincial autonomy in which, it is important to note, the Mussulman and Orthodox sections of the population joined hands. This movement, harried as it was by an alert and autocratic administration, developed slowly ; but it survived troops, gendarmes, secret police, *agents provocateurs*, and corrupt tribunals alike, and, fomented by opposition to the Austrian and Magyar monopoly of public appointments, and the official exploitation under which the provinces groaned, grew steadily in strength. It is noteworthy, though perhaps little more than a coincidence, that protest against the scandalous régime of the Hungarian Count Khuen Hedervary became more marked after the advent of King Peter to the throne of Serbia. In 1905, the Croatian and Serbian parties coalesced, the Dalmatians adhered to the movement, the Slovenes endorsed it, and the Magyar Ban and his majority gave way. A year later, the agitation manifested itself in more violent form in the riots of Sarajevo and Mostar—risings which were as ruthlessly subdued as their predecessors. Brutal repression of this description only served to augment the prevailing unrest, and the position steadily worsened.

Into the situation produced by the renaissance of Serbia, the Russo-Serbian *rapprochement*, the Young Turk revolution, and the welter of discontent in Bosnia-Hertze-govina, the Habsburgs flung the long-meditated Declaration of Annexation in 1908. In the kingdom of Serbia itself this critical development created the utmost consternation. Upon receipt of the news in Beograd the

populace gathered *en masse* around the monument erected to the memory of Prince Michel, crying: "Down with Austria, who has introduced into Bosnia, not liberty and civilisation, but an iron tyranny." The Serbian nation was roused to action, the spirit of Kossovo was born anew, and it was evident that the people were prepared to stake their all rather than be drawn themselves more firmly into the Austrian mesh, see their kinsmen handed over an unwilling prey to the Habsburg vulture, and submit to the ruin of their highest ambitions and aspirations. But Serbia was still in the midst of her regeneration and preparation, and wars cannot be fought with good intentions. Everything turned, therefore, upon the attitude of Europe. There was excellent motive for European intervention. The Decree was a deliberate violation of two solemn treaties:

- (1) The Treaty of Berlin (1878), which was signed by all the Great Powers; and
- (2) The Treaty of London (1871) to which Austria was a party, and which laid it down that no signatory power could liberate itself from treaty engagements without the consent of the other parties to it.

Further, it meant a definite strengthening of the Triple Alliance as against the Entente Cordiale and threatened the European equilibrium, while Turkey was naturally eager to oppose the blow at her sovereign rights. Above all, it was a direct affront to Russia, who had, so to speak, taken Serbia under her wing since the passing of Alexander, and was now anxious to remedy her past mistakes in the Balkans.

Austria-Hungary undoubtedly wanted war. There was an open manifestation of a desire to finish once and for all with Serbia; but there were restraining influences at work on both sides. So far as the German Empire was concerned, Prince von Bülow, the Imperial Chancellor, did not consider the time opportune for a trial of strength. While he considered the German Fleet could hold up that of Russia, he desired to wait until he could challenge

British maritime supremacy, considering that victories on land would not compensate for disaster at sea. He did not want to go so far as to provoke England, but rather desired to achieve the immediate object of Pan-Germanism by iron-handed diplomacy. Hence he curbed the war spirit in Vienna. On the other hand, Russia had not recovered from the effects of the Japanese War, and was in the midst of military reorganisation. Consequently she was not prepared to carry the dispute to the field of battle, and, while according to Serbia a considerable measure of diplomatic support, she capitulated on receipt of an ultimatum from Germany in March 1909; whereupon Serbia, thrown upon her own resources, was forced to accept the *fait accompli* and make a hypocritical and consequently valueless declaration to the effect that none of her rights had thereby been infringed. Yet the Serbs emerged from out the crisis stronger and prouder, and thoroughly roused to the life-struggle which it was now obvious lay before them, it being plainly evident that Austria-Hungary would not rest content with the *status quo*. They therefore had to prepare to meet the inevitable attack under the best possible conditions; and while the Government worked to the completion of the army reorganisation, the Narodna Odbrana, which had been formed during the annexation crisis to enrol, train, and equip volunteers by private effort, cast off its military cloak and devoted itself to the fostering of the patriotic spirit.

Whatever doubts as to the real intentions of Austria-Hungary had existed in some minds, they were now completely dispelled. Amongst other things, the precise object of the various commercial treaties that had been imposed upon the kingdom became clear even to the peasants, and while no stone was left unturned to strengthen the army, it was realised that the danger of strangulation by economic and commercial methods was almost as great as that of military invasion. Serbia was land-locked—she had no outlet save through countries which had been hostile to her for centuries and which might at any time hem her in completely on one pretext or another. Thus it became obvious that, if the nation

was to attain that free and independent existence for which it was striving, an outlet to the Adriatic Sea was essential.

The outbreak of patriotism in Serbia and the demand for economic freedom which accompanied it were, of course, counted as an additional "provocation" by Austria-Hungary. Indeed, the Military Party in Vienna was very dissatisfied that a peaceful settlement had been attained. As early as November 8th, when the check was administered to the warlike ambitions of the military leaders, one of the leading service newspapers of Vienna wrote, "We have missed an excellent opportunity. When our monitors approached the Serbian capital we should have seized the city. Conflict with Serbia and Montenegro is inevitable. The longer we wait, the greater will be the cost." It is not surprising, therefore, that during the *pourparlers* which followed, many attempts (to which we shall presently refer) were made to precipitate hostilities, or that when, after the settlement, the Austro-Hungarians saw the Serbs rejoicing in their heritage instead of sitting in sackcloth and ashes, while they themselves were obliged to evacuate the Sandjak, pay a heavy indemnity to Turkey, suffer severe loss by reason of the Turkish boycott, and support the cost of a partial mobilisation spread over a period of six months, they determined to provoke a new crisis, as a result of which, with the assistance of Germany, Serbia should be definitely subjected either to vassalage or annihilation.

In what persistent manner they worked to this end we shall shortly demonstrate; but, in the meantime, it will be instructive to examine the relations of the Vienna Government with the Serbs and Croats of Bosnia-Hertze-govina from the date of the annexation. We have already outlined the situation in the autumn of 1908, and the annexation itself aroused the indignation of the entire populace. For them it meant not merely the destruction of a scrap of paper and the denial of solemn pledges taken at Berlin, but the shackling of a nation in the iron chains of an already detested oppressor, the actual carrying off of a people into bondage. All that was best in the land rose up in solemn protest, and, before the almost universal

unrest, the Vienna Government granted a so-called Constitution, which was so out of keeping with the essential principles of popular control that it has been freely likened to that "enjoyed" by Alsace-Lorraine. But the rising nationalists were not to be pacified by this expedient. On the opening day of the Diet a student fired at the Governor of Bosnia-Hertzegovina, and this shot inaugurated a series of violent outrages which culminated in the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand on June 28th, 1914.

The object of the Austro-Hungarian Government, it is almost needless to remark, was to stamp out the Yugo-Slav spirit in Bosnia and Hertzegovina, and for this purpose they decided to proceed by judicial methods, which, in the case of political trials in the Monarchy, are notoriously a travesty of justice. The two principal prosecutions now undertaken achieved European notoriety as a result of the methods employed. The first is known as the Agram (Zagreb) High Treason Trial (August 1908), when fifty-three Austrian Serbs were arraigned as the result of the publication in Budapest of a pamphlet called the *Finale*, which purported to give details of a revolutionary Pan-Serbian movement among the Southern Slavs of the Monarchy. The witness was a notorious criminal and well known as an informer in the pay of the military authorities at Sarajevo; but his story was accepted by the Court, and upon this testimony, backed up by sundry fabricated documents, the defendants were found guilty and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

The evidence was, however, too flimsy to stand, even in an Austrian court of law. In the Croatian Parliament itself proofs were produced showing that the principal witness for the Crown had been paid to testify by the Prefect of Police in Agram, that he had been instructed as to the manner in which he was to reply to certain questions, and that his depositions were a tissue of flagrant falsehoods. In the face of a statement published by Counsel for the Defence (Dr. Hinkovitch), the Supreme Court subsequently quashed the convictions "because of considerable doubt as to the truth of the statements on

which the finding was based"; but, fearing the result of a definite acquittal, the whole of the proceedings were set aside by a Royal decree (September 1910).

What is known as the Friedjung Case presented an even more damaging example of Austro-Hungarian judicial methods. On March 25th, 1909, at the height of the annexation crisis, Dr. Friedjung, a well-known historian in close touch with the Government of Vienna, published an article in the *Neue Freie Presse* in which he accused the Serbian Royal Family and Government of having bribed the leaders of the Serbo-Croat Coalition to provoke a revolution in the Yugo-Slav provinces of the Monarchy. Having quoted a mass of circumstantial evidence, he asserted that he was in possession of all the proofs necessary to support his assertions.

The article was doubtless intended to inflame popular passions against Serbia, and assist the precipitation of hostilities, but the publication practically coincided with Russia's capitulation, which removed all danger of war, and the only immediate result was a libel action brought against the writer by the Serbo-Croat deputies. The case came before the Courts in Vienna in December 1909. The historian then produced his incriminating evidence, which consisted of photographs of documents alleged to have been stolen from the Serbian Foreign Office in Beograd and from the offices of the "Slovenski Yug,"¹ together, amongst other details, with the minutes of that Society. The originals of the documents, it was asserted, had been returned to the archives in order that their disappearance should pass unnoticed.

Unfortunately for the Professor and the diplomacy of which he was either the representative or dupe, a brief examination demonstrated that his "proofs" were nothing more nor less than clumsy forgeries. The phrasology was German, the "Serbian" idioms were merely literal translations from the German, the facts were awry, and the forger had gone inexcusably wrong in his dates. Steps were immediately taken to disprove this evidence. It was shown that one of the documents purporting to have been stolen from the Serbian Foreign Office made

¹ Southern Slav Society.

reference to a "prospective" Serbian loan which had actually been raised a year previously. All the photographs of minutes of the "Slovenski Yug" referred to the meetings as having been presided over by Professor Bozho Markovitch and bore his signature; but no less an authority than the Berlin police was obliged to testify that, during the whole period covered by the alleged minutes, M. Markovitch was engaged upon certain scientific studies in the German capital.

The mystery was definitely cleared up some months later, when an impecunious individual named Vasitch was arrested in Beograd. At his trial he stated that, originally engaged as a tutor to the children of a secretary of the Austro-Hungarian Legation in Beograd, he had later on been bribed to redraw the drafts of diplomatic reports and the minutes of the meetings of the "Slovenski Yug," which were submitted to him in very indifferent Serbian written in Latin characters, and to forge the signatures of certain persons, the originals of some of which were supplied and others of which he had to procure for himself. This work was executed in the Austro-Hungarian Legation, and the texts were photographed. Vasitch produced substantial proofs of his allegations (amongst them being a copy of the fabricated protocols of the "Slovenski Yug" meeting written in his own hand) and also explained to the Court the manner in which he had succeeded in blackmailing the Austrian Legation until arrested by the Serbian authorities. He was sentenced to five years' penal servitude.

There is little to add to this sordid story of Austrian diplomacy, save to point out that had war resulted from the intrigue, Serbia would have been occupied, and many and sundry in the Yugo-Slav provinces would have been done to death on a charge of conspiracy, for which actions the Friedjung forgeries would have been put forward as ample justification. The chief forger was none other than His Excellency Count Forgach, who became subsequently a departmental chief of the Vienna Foreign Office and was part author of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia of July 1914. Before, however, these facts came to light, Professor Friedjung publicly regretted his "mis-

take," and, under pressure from the authorities, the prosecution for libel was abandoned.

There have been many other disclosures of the part allocated to Austro-Hungarian "justice" in the suppression of the nationalism of the Yugo-Slavs, but the "Agram" and "Friedjung" trials will suffice as examples. Needless to say, this persecution of innocent people in the annexed provinces fomented the desire to escape from the thralldom, and the intellectuals naturally came to regard Serbia as their one possible hope of salvation. The masses, too, found that no improvement in their particular lot followed the disappearance of Turkish suzerainty. They remained crushed under a heavy load of extortionate rent and taxation, and the state of growing unrest among the peasantry was evidenced by serious agrarian riots in Northern Bosnia in 1910.

It is clear, therefore, that even prior to the Balkan Wars, all classes in Bosnia-Hertzevovina were united in hostility to Austro-Hungarian rule. There was here no provocation by Serbia, no unrest inspired by Serbian intrigue; but rather the inevitable result of a régime of misrule, oppression, and persecution.

THE BALKAN LEAGUE AND WARS

The next development of importance was the rapid expansion of the Balkan States. Serbia, as we have seen, had made considerable progress under King Peter, Bulgaria had been steadily building up her military strength, and Greece, under the able direction of M. Venizelos, had been almost transformed. Simultaneously, the growth of national chauvinism in Turkey and the effort made by the Young Turks to Ottomanise the Christian population of Macedonia were the cause of much misgiving to all three of her neighbours, none of whom was prepared to welcome any strengthening of the Ottoman hold upon Turkey-in-Europe or to tolerate the annihilation of the non-Mussulman populations in a province to which all three laid claim. The Turco-Italian War and the consequent weakening of Turkish arms created a propitious occasion, and, under the ægis

of Russia, an anti-Turkish Treaty between Bulgaria and Serbia was signed on March 19th, 1912. The cause of Balkan union found a powerful advocate in M. Venizelos, who was exercised about the status of Crete as well as concerning the situation in Macedonia, and, on May 29th of the same year, the Greco-Bulgarian Treaty was signed. These two treaties formed the basis of the Balkan League.

Austria was well aware of the movement which was afoot, for her relations with Bulgaria had been singularly friendly since 1908, and, apart from mere conjectures that the Habsburg Government was kept advised of the negotiations, we find proof in the statement of Dr. Daneff to the *Zeit* newspaper to the effect that the last stone of the Balkan Alliance was laid in Vienna at the end of May 1912 (on the occasion of the visit of King Ferdinand). Bulgaria definitely approved of the conventions in the following September. It may, therefore, well be asked why Austria, seeing that the success of the Balkan States would probably benefit Serbia, and that her own interests could best be served by fostering rivalry in the Peninsula, gave her assent to the scheme. The probable explanation is that she, together with most of the other Great Powers, was confident that Turkey would emerge victorious, when she would have been provided with an excuse to rush in to the defence of the Christians and occupy Serbia and Macedonia. Once there, she would have remained. In support of this contention, it may be noted that when France subsequently proposed to offer joint mediation, Austria refused.

War between the Balkan States and Turkey was declared on October 18th, 1912. A month later, the Serbs completely defeated the Turks at Koumanovo and decided the Macedonian campaign in favour of the Allies. It is instructive to observe that from the morrow of that victory Austria-Hungary adopted an attitude hostile to Serbia. From that moment she regarded each succeeding success for Serbian arms in the light of a new menace to her vital interests. She invented the ludicrous Prohaska incident and demanded reparation for imaginary insult, massed 200,000 men on the Serbian frontier, laid mines in the Sava and Danube and patrolled her monitors

before Beograd during the night, proclaimed the inviolability of the Sandjak of Novi-Bazaar to prevent contact between Montenegro and Serbia, later on ordered the Serbs to arrest their march to the Adriatic and the Montenegrins to evacuate Scutari, and finally demanded the creation of an independent Albania with frontiers so extensive that it was impossible for Serbia to accept them. The determination to provoke a European war rather than permit Serbia to attain real freedom was manifested again in March and April 1913, when general hostilities were once more imminent. On this occasion the Monarchy was in a stronger position than in 1908. The Alliance with Germany had been renewed, both countries had completed their armament, and, while the Central Powers threatened, Russia was still unready, and France and England argued. Austria accordingly gained the day, Serbia being obliged to content herself with a vain promise of a commercial outlet on the Adriatic.

Nevertheless, peace with Turkey (May 20th, 1913) left Serbia considerably aggrandised—a fact obviously distasteful to Austria-Hungary, for the ink was scarce dry on the treaty before the diplomats of Vienna and Budapest began to intrigue against its execution. In this connection, their close relations with Sofia served them well, and they forthwith set to work to turn to account the dispute over the division of the spoils. An arrangement between Bulgaria and Serbia proved to be difficult. It cannot be alleged that the Bulgars required any great encouragement in the course which they pursued, for they were determined to secure the hegemony of the Balkans, and, controlled by a mentality largely made up of innate arrogance and greedy rapacity, they held an exaggerated idea both of their own prowess and the weakness of their quondam allies. Thus, while Serbia consented to adopt the normal course of settlement and submit the dispute to the arbitration of the Tzar of Russia, as provided for by the Serbo-Bulgar Treaty, Bulgaria made a pretence of agreement, and simultaneously treacherously attacked the Serbs and Greeks during the night of June 29th and 30th and ushered in the unhappy conflict of 1913.

In this affair the collaboration of Austria-Hungary with Bulgaria was of the utmost importance, and provides conclusive evidence of the manner in which the Monarchy persisted in its determination to ruin Serbia. As early as May 1913 the Vienna Government had instructed its Minister at Bucharest to inform the Roumanian Government that, in the case of a Serbo-Bulgarian conflict, Austria-Hungary would defend Bulgarian interests, if necessary by force of arms. This communication was made to M. Take Ionescu. A further development occurred a few weeks later when, upon the very day upon which the Bulgarian Government instructed Dr. Daneff to leave for the proposed arbitration at Petrograd, the Austrian Minister at Sofia visited King Ferdinand. After a conversation which lasted for four hours, King Ferdinand summoned to him General Savoff, the acting Commander-in-Chief, and the following night the orders for the treacherous attack on Greece and Serbia were telegraphed to the Bulgarian armies.

The writings of the Viennese Press clearly pointed to the existence of an Austro-Bulgarian pact, and influential circles were convinced that Serbia would be defeated. The exact nature of the agreement had remained a secret ; but we are entitled to assume that it constituted the engagement outlined to M. Take Ionescu, for, following the defeat of Bulgaria, Austria sought the permission of her Allies to attack Serbia. Her principal difficulty lay with Italy, because, according to the terms of the renewed Triple Alliance, any aggrandisement of Austria-Hungary in the Balkan Peninsula was to be accompanied by an analogous extension of Italian influence. For the details of the conspiracy we are indebted to the statement made by Signor Giolitti in the Italian Chamber. According to these disclosures, the Marquis di San Giuliano telegraphed on August 19th to Signor Giolitti, then absent from Rome, informing him that Austria had notified Italy (and Germany) of her intention to attack Serbia, and, characterising her proposed action as "defensive," had invoked the *casus fœderis*. San Giuliano gave it as his opinion that the *casus fœderis* did not exist. M. Giolitti shared his colleague's view, and added that the proposed Austrian

action could not be considered as "defensive," since nobody thought of attacking her.

It is, therefore, clear that in August 1913 Austria desired to perpetrate an unwarrantable and unjustifiable attack upon Serbia (in collaboration with Bulgaria) and that she was restrained principally by the opposition of Italy, who, for her own particular reasons, regarded the possibility of any further extension of Austrian influence in the Peninsula with disfavour. Thus did another Germano-Magyar plot against Serbia fail in its purpose.

Simultaneously, however, the Monarchy had been making full use of the commercial weapon. After the settlement of the annexation crisis, the two States, in order to demonstrate their friendly disposition toward one another, expressed a mutual desire to end the customs war and regularise their economic relations by a new treaty of commerce. Both sides reduced their demands to a minimum, and a new pact entered into being at the beginning of 1911. Under this arrangement the Serbian export was restricted to a limited number of slaughtered cattle and the frontier traffic confined to a very narrow zone.

The duration of the treaty was fixed at seven years, but, well before the expiration of that term, the territorial extension of Serbia, her reiterated desire for an outlet to the Adriatic, her arrangement with Greece for through transit by Salonika—all proofs that the kingdom sought escape from dependence upon her great neighbour—alarmed the Austro-Hungarian Government and drove them to a further endeavour to checkmate the ambitious bid for economic freedom. The new treaty would normally have remained operative until 1918, but no sooner had the Serbo-Bulgarian War finished (1913) than Vienna sent in her demand for a revision, invoking as her reason the fact that the alterations in the distribution of Balkan territory had brought in their train a considerable change in the economic situation. At the same time she communicated her suggestions. Faithful, as always, to the policy of securing virtual control of Serbia, she demanded nothing less than a Customs Union. The Serbs, as was their custom in dealing with the Monarchy,

made tactful reply. They were prepared to examine the new situation with the object of ascertaining if a revision of the treaty had really become necessary, and, in such case, to enter into new *pourparlers*; but, as to the proposed Customs Union, they refused, in principle, to entertain the idea. This, however, was not what Austria wanted. Her object was to attain political ends by economic and commercial methods. She had no use for a revision of the treaty without the possibility of the wished-for Customs Union, and negotiations therefore ceased.

This was the finale of the series of attempts to subjugate Serbia by commercial intrigue, and it is instructive to draw certain deductions from this aspect of Habsburg policy. Alone among the States of Europe, the Monarchy would seem to have failed to recognise that, with the attainment of administrative independence by Serbia in 1878, the little kingdom obtained the right to treat with other nations on a basis of equality. She continued to regard Serbia as a country to be exploited in the interest of her political and commercial ambitions. Her reclamations universally took the form of demands. She recognised neither Serbia's right to accord her commercial policy with her national interests, nor to refuse proposed stipulations if they were considered disadvantageous. Serbia was regarded as a vassal State, and any refusal to accept Austrian propositions was treated as a hostile action. From this failure to recognise actualities sprang many of the frequent and bitter conflicts which perpetually disturbed the relations between the two countries.

AFTER BUCHAREST

As a result of the two Balkan victories, the territory of the kingdom of Serbia was nearly doubled, and her population increased by some 1,300,000 souls. The common struggle had created indissoluble ties of friendship and interest with Montenegro, the understanding with Greece was complete, and the facilities accorded to Serbian commerce at Salonika placed that port at her

disposition. True, the Serbs could not console themselves for the loss of the Adriatic, but they had much to do to organise and develop their conquests. So they sought above all for peace, and strove to give no pretext for interference by Austria-Hungary.

But, just as it takes two to make a quarrel, so the good intentions of Serbia alone were not sufficient to preserve harmony. And harmony in the Balkans was very far from being the desire of Austria-Hungary. Faithful to the precedent created by their attitude towards the Treaty of London (1913), no sooner had the Peace of Bucharest been concluded than the Central Powers conspired to ruin it. Austria could not bring herself to pardon the check that her ambitions had received. She had no intention of allowing the *status quo* to stand. "In the Balkans," declared Count Khuen Hedervary to the Hungarian Delegations, "the period of formation and reconstitution is not yet at an end; the war has not brought about peace. The frontiers have only been traced on paper, they are merely provisional. They must be rectified in order that security may be established." It was striking to find the Habsburg Monarchy, the alien governor of down-trodden, oppressed, and persecuted subject races, suddenly seized with tender sympathies and respect for the rights of nationalities, anxious for the lot of the semi-civilised Albanians and the ambitions of the Bulgarian outlaws of Macedonia. Yet, in order to serve their sordid political aims, Austro-Hungarian statesmen gave themselves up to such blatant hypocrisy.

Their first move was to organise an Albanian rising (September 1913). The tribes succeeded in crossing the Serbian frontier and occupying Dibra, when they were met and driven back by Serbian troops, who, in order to protect the national territory against further incursion, occupied certain strategic points of vantage. On October 17th Count Berchtold handed King Peter's Government an ultimatum ordering the evacuation of the positions within a delay of eight days, and, failing compliance, the intervention of Austrian troops was threatened. The importance of this development really centred in the fact that now, for the first time, Austria-Hungary

ignored the Triple Entente in her negotiations with a Balkan State. She secured the support of Italy and Germany, but contented herself with merely communicating the text of her Note to London, Paris, and Petrograd. The object of this sinister move, by which it was intended to establish a precedent for isolated Austrian action in the Balkans, did not escape M. Pashitch, and though, after Vienna had spurned the idea of arbitration, Serbia was obliged to capitulate, she addressed her reply to all six of the Great Powers, and thus unmasked the Austrian strategy and restored its quondam European character to the question.

Towards the close of 1913 a further effort was made to secure control of Serbia by circuitous methods. The possession of railway communications with Salonika and Constantinople respectively had always been an essential feature of the evolution of Pan-German policy, and just as Austria-Hungary had held on to the Sandjak of Novi-Bazaar until she was convinced that the construction of an iron road through that territory to the Ægean was beyond the competence of her engineers, so Germany had sought in vain for a practical route to the Bosphorus other than through Serbia. Prior to the Balkan Wars the Central Powers had accordingly become convinced that the Beograd-Nish-Salonika and Beograd-Nish-Sofia-Constantinople railroads were necessary to the furtherance of their respective aspirations.

Now, in the provinces ceded to Serbia at Bucharest, there lay the Zibeftje-Goumendje section of this organisation—then owned by the Oriental Railway Company, of which the majority of the shares had, for obvious reasons, been purchased by the German and Austrian banks at the request of their Governments. And, since this section was but a continuation of the Serbian State Railways, the Serbian Government proposed to buy it, together with the Monastir section of the Monastir-Salonika line, exploited by the same company. Count Berchtold vigorously opposed this suggestion. Nothing that Serbia could do or suggest served to turn the Imperial Government from its determination to spread a network of Austrian spies over the Serbian system, and, when nego-

tiations reached a deadlock, Herr Tchirsky¹ bluntly informed the Serbian Minister in Vienna that, since the Central Powers had need of these railways, it would be necessary for Austria to make war on Serbia! This unambiguous statement was uttered by the Kaiser's representative at the Court of Francis Joseph in the spring of 1914; that is to say, months before the Sarajevo murder staggered Europe and provided the excuse for carrying out the threat.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

During the first six months of 1914 a remarkable series of conferences between various European crowned heads and statesmen—notably those of the Triple Alliance—were the outward sign of a troubled diplomatic situation, and principal among them stood out the meeting between the Kaiser and the Archduke Francis Ferdinand at Konopischt, where it is probable that an aggressive programme was arranged between the Central Powers. During the whole of this period the Balkan situation was in a very unsettled state. The Albanian régime under Prince William of Wied had proved a conspicuous failure, and Turkey, who was in close collaboration with Germany, evidenced a desire to regain the sovereignty of the Ægean Islands which had been allotted to Greece, and further provoked Athens by atrociously persecuting the Hellenes in Asia Minor.

What was the nature of the programme elaborated at Konopischt we shall probably never learn. That it concerned a deliberate attempt to upset the Bucharest settlement and exploit the recently arranged *rapprochement* between Bulgaria and Turkey (together with, perhaps, the unsatisfactory situation in Albania) to the profit of Austria as the advance-guard of Pan-Germanism in the Balkans, is obvious from the trend of Teuton-Magyar diplomacy and the bleatings of the officially inspired Press. But into the prevailing unrest was suddenly thrown the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand at Sarajevo on June 28th, 1914.

¹ German Ambassador in Vienna.

On the morning of that fatal day, the Austrian heir-apparent was driving in the town when a Bosniac named Chabrinovitch threw two bombs, which fell short. A natural indisposition to take further risks appears to have been over-ridden by official determination, and during the afternoon's procession the assassin Princhip murdered the Archduke and his consort by means of two well-aimed shots from an automatic pistol. The administration naturally alleged the existence of a widespread plot, directed, of course, from Beograd; but the two principals had little in common, and it is more logical to suggest that no understanding existed between them. Chabrinovitch was a known anarchist, and the son of an Austrian spy, while Princhip was a student, remarkable for his industry and application, who had been exiled from his home and politically persecuted by the authorities. The one alleged outside instigation; the other proclaimed his individual responsibility. Both were Austrian subjects.

In effect, the Archduke was the victim of a régime which had held Bosnia in bondage for more than thirty years, and which all but openly declared that its object was to exterminate the individuality of the Serbian race. Such methods as had been employed invariably breed their own reward. While for lack of definite proof we pass over the possibility that the crime was deliberately planned by the Pan-Germanists, there is surely little occasion for surprise that some spirit more highly strung, more emotional than its fellows, should have provoked outrage in order to call the attention of Europe to conditions of existence that were fast becoming intolerable to an enslaved people.

Disraeli once said that "Assassination never yet changed the history of the world," and in this instance it would have served only for an increase of repression in Bosnia had not Austria-Hungary, and with her Germany, been ready to utilise any and every excuse for accomplishing their desire to annihilate Serbia as a step in the direction of world hegemony. Despite the anxiety of the Vienna and Budapest newspapers to fasten the responsibility upon Serbia, there were no immediate developments. As a matter of fact, it would seem that the crime at first

upset some deeply laid German plan, for the Kaiser, on learning the news, is alleged to have remarked significantly : "All my work must be recommenced." But the Austro-Hungarian diplomats were quick to recognise the new and unlooked-for opportunity for the carrying through of their nefarious schemes.

"We must settle our account with Serbia," wrote Baron von Giesl from Beograd to his Government. "Both in order that our Monarchy may preserve its position as a Great Power, and even in order that it may continue to exist as a Great Power, a war is inevitable. If we hesitate to place our relations with our neighbour on a clear basis, we must share the responsibility for the difficulties and unfavourable conditions of the conflict which must necessarily be engaged, sooner or later, in the future. If we are resolved to present formidable demands, together with a demand for a real control—for only a control of this kind will succeed in cleaning out the Augean stables of Pan-Slav agitation—we must take into consideration all the possible consequences of our action and possess, from the very commencement, the firm will to obtain our requirements. Half-measures and protracted negotiations, resulting in a mixed compromise, would be the hardest blow that could be dealt at the credit of Austria in Serbia and the situation in Europe."

In short, the Baron saw that the long-awaited occasion to secure that real control of Serbia, for which Austria had so persistently striven, had at length arrived. His advice obviously accorded with the opinion prevalent in Vienna and Berlin. Moreover, the situation in Europe seemed favourable. England had her Irish crisis, France her Caillaux scandal, and Russia her labour troubles. The military position was likewise propitious for the Central Powers. The Vienna *Militärische Rundschau* declared : "The moment is yet favourable for us. If we do not decide upon war now, we shall have to fight in two or three years at the latest in less favourable circumstances. At present the initiative lies with us ; Russia is not ready. The moral factors are with us, as also is the force. As we must fight some day, let us provoke the conflict immediately."

Despite the bellicose attitude of the major part of the Austro-Hungarian Press and the general effort to convey to Europe the impression that the assassination was the result of a plot prepared in Serbia, the exchange of views occasioned by diplomatic circles justified a hope that there would be no untoward development. Serbia took early steps to make her position clear. On June 30th M. Yovanovitch¹ advised Baron Macchio that "The Serbian Government most energetically disapproves of the Sarajevo murder, and on its part will loyally do everything possible to demonstrate that it will not tolerate on its territory any agitation or enterprise calculated to

¹ At the time of this crisis in world-history, Serbia was represented at the Court of the Emperor Francis-Joseph by M. Yovan M. Yovanovitch. She was thus fortunate in having at Vienna one of her foremost diplomats, and the Minister's reports to his Government demonstrated that he possessed a clear understanding of the submerged issues involved, together with that sense of political intuition which is indispensable to success in diplomacy.

Still on the right side of fifty, M. Yovanovitch, like so many of his colleagues, had studied law at Paris, after which he became, in the course of a varied career, *Attaché*, Secretary and *Chargé d'Affaires* in the Serbian Consulates and Legations at Uskub (Skoplye), Athens, Constantinople, Sofia and Cettign. With this experience at his command, he returned to Beograd to become General Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (a position similar to that occupied by the Permanent Under-Secretary at the British Foreign Office), where he remained until November, 1912, when M. Pashitch nominated him to the Vienna Legation. At this post he fought through one crisis after another, and, though his experience of the problems of South Eastern Europe convinced him that he was striving after an almost unattainable ideal, the difficulties and set-backs encountered merely strengthened his determination to labour for a Serbo-Austrian understanding based on the mutual recognition of the essential interests of both States.

Upon the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary in July, 1914, M. Yovanovitch returned to Nish to assist M. Pashitch, in the capacity of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. He passed successfully through the ordeal of the retreat to the Adriatic in the winter of 1915, and continued his collaborations with the Prime Minister upon the establishment of the Serbian Government at Corfu. After having accompanied the Prince Regent Alexander and M. Pashitch on the Serbian diplomatic mission to the Entente capitals in the spring of 1916, M. Yovanovitch was appointed Serbian Minister to the Court of St. James in succession to M. Boshkovitch.

Apart from the renown achieved in the narrow world of diplomacy, M. Yovanovitch was a distinguished student of international literature, reading fluently in the Serbian, English, French, Russian, German and Bulgarian languages. He was the author of several political and historical essays on Balkan questions, the translator into Serbian of sundry French authors (notably Balzac), and was also responsible for the Serbian rendering of "Notes sur l'Angleterre" by H. Taine.

jeopardise our relations with Austria-Hungary, already so delicate." The following day M. Pashitch notified his Ministers accredited to European Courts that the crime had met with the reprobation of all classes in Serbia, where it was recognised that it might have a most unfavourable repercussion upon relations with the Monarchy. He protested, however, against the endeavour of the Austro-Hungarian Press to saddle Serbia with the responsibility for an act of madness, committed by an Austrian subject, which it was in the vital interest of Serbia herself to avert.

This spirit seems at first to have been reflected or assumed by Austro-Hungarian diplomacy. On June 30th the Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople assured the Serbian *chargé d'affaires* that he need have no fear lest the event should endanger the more satisfactory relations existing between the two States, and on July 3rd Baron Macchio told M. Yovanovitch at Vienna that Austria-Hungary accused neither the Serbian people nor their Government, but "certain agitators." Finally, the aged Emperor himself, in addressing the Austrian and Hungarian Presidents of Council, declared that he was "convinced that the murder is only the work of a small group of misguided persons."

It was scarcely necessary for M. Pashitch to assure the world through his Ministers that the incident was regarded with unmixed disapproval by King Peter's Cabinet, for, apart from the obvious fact that the State had pressing need of a prolonged peace in which to repair the wastage of the recent campaigns and consolidate her conquests, the Government had striven to guard against any aggravation of their relations with the neighbouring Monarchy. Any anarchistic tendency in Beograd had been carefully watched, and, indeed, the Beograd police had actually warned their Vienna confrères against Chabrinovitch—to no purpose—and on June 21st M. Pashitch himself had advised the Ballplatz of his suspicions that a plot was being organised in Bosnia. It is evidences such as these, added to the unpopularity of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand in certain Viennese circles, the Emperor's preference for the Archduke Karl, and the fact

that, in the alleged presence of a widespread conspiracy (signalled by the Sarajevo police the following day and of which, if it existed, they must have been well aware previously), the victim was driven into public again after Chabrinovitch's abortive attempt on his life, which lent weight to the suggestion that the crime was actually abetted by the Austro-Hungarian authorities themselves.

When this has been said, however, it must be admitted that the suspicions that some of the principal actors in the Sarajevo drama were in close relation with persons at Beograd were too strong to be passed over in silence by the Austro-Hungarian authorities. In the circumstances, the Monarchy very properly might have acquainted the Serbian Government with the facts and the names of those compromised by the evidence and called upon them—

- (1) To hold answerable those judged who were in Serbian territory, and
- (2) To give guarantees for a more effective control of the Pan-Serbian movement.

Had this very logical course been adopted, it is evident, from the declaration made by M. Pashitch and the reply subsequently sent by Serbia to the Austrian Ultimatum, that the matter could have been arranged in a manner apparently satisfactory to all parties. That the possibility of such an equitable arrangement was not overlooked in the early days following the tragedy is obvious from the assurances, given to the Entente representatives in Vienna, that the conditions imposed upon Serbia would be most acceptable and such as would permit them to count upon a pacific solution of the crisis. Further, on July 8th, the *Pester Lloyd* (Budapest) declared that—“Nothing will be demanded from the Serbian Government that can affect their natural self-consciousness or the national dignity entrusted to their care.”

As an alternative, it was open to the Monarchy (as the agent of the Central Powers) to turn the incident to account and use the assassination to reopen the whole question of her relations with the Serbian State and the

Yugo-Slav movement, and make a further bid for a re-settlement of the Balkans in her favour. From the outset this course was strongly supported in certain clerical, militarist, and diplomatic circles. The *Reichspost* was early on the scene with a declaration that "We have neglected to smoke out the poisonous den of Beograd in time." The *Militärische Rundschau* wrote, "At the slightest attempt of Serbia to deny or laud [the crime] our only reply must be at last, at last, the march on Beograd"; and the already quoted letter of Baron von Giesl is sufficient evidence of the Serbophobe diplomatic point of view.

For some days there was a *détente* due, no doubt, to consideration of the general European situation; but by July 14th it became evident that the militarist party had triumphed and that Austria had determined upon extreme measures regardless of possible consequences. On that day the *Neue Freie Presse*, whose intimate relations with the Berlin Foreign Office were well known, declared:

"We must settle our affair with Serbia by force of arms. It is evident that a settlement is impossible by pacific means, and, since we shall arrive at war later on, it is better to finish at once."

In addition, the entire Government-controlled Austrian and Hungarian Press was inflamed by the official *Korrespondenz Bureau*, and it became evident that Sarajevo was to be employed as a lever for the application of the old policy of reducing Serbia to dependence upon the Monarchy. On July 15th M. Yovanovitch foreshadowed the *mémoire* and the ultimatum which were to follow nearly a fortnight later, and from far-off London M. Boshkovitch signalled his conviction that Austria-Hungary was preparing to exert such pressure on Serbia as could be transformed into hostile attack.

Little doubt now existed that the Central Powers were prepared for a general conflagration. On July 21st the Russian Ambassador at Vienna made it known that no *démarche* made with the object of humiliating Serbia

could leave Russia indifferent. The next day, when the text of the Austrian Note was already known in Berlin, the German Press put forward the theory that war was inevitable and the moment very opportune, and on July 24th M. Sazonoff unveiled the real object of the Central Powers when he informed Sir G. Buchanan that Austria “aimed at overthrowing the present *status quo* in the Balkans and establishing her own supremacy there.”

The desire to punish Serbia for the murder of the Archduke had become a mere platitude. The crime of Sarajevo, like the annexation of Bosnia-Hertzegevina, the creation of an independent Albania, and the encouragement afforded to Bulgaria in 1913, had been made a servant of the Pan-German scheme to establish Austria on the Ægean and Germany on the Persian Gulf. Nothing could have been clearer than Count Mensdorff's declaration to Sir Edward Grey on July 27th that—

“So long as Serbia was confronted with Turkey, Austria never took any severe measures because of her adherence to the policy of the free development of the Balkan States. Now that Serbia had doubled her territory and population without any Austrian interference” (His Excellency should have said “in spite of Austrian interference”) “the suppression of Serbia's subversive aims was a matter of self-defence and self-preservation on Austria's part.”

In other words, the Central Powers had determined once again to reduce Serbia to the status of a vassal or annihilate her as a step in the subjugation of the Balkan Peninsula to Pan-German ambition, and to carry through their aims, if necessary, by an appeal to the sword.

Count Mensdorff's illuminating declaration was immediately confirmed by Count Berchtold himself, who informed Sir Maurice de Bunsen that he sought a revision of the Treaty of Bucharest. The Austrian Chancellor averred that he had never really believed in the permanency of that arrangement, which was necessarily most artificial, it being obvious that the interests it had hoped to con-

ciliate were in themselves absolutely opposed the one to the other. This, of course, was only a half-truth, but the underlying idea will be understood when it is remembered that Austria had backed Bulgaria in the Second Balkan War, and that the Central Powers were assured of the support of Bulgars and Turks in the coming conflict.

Yet, until the end of July, the Central Powers persisted in a half-hearted attempt to hide their real intentions. Even on July 27th Count Mensdorff contradicted his undiplomatic *exposé* of Austria's designs by adding that the Monarchy had neither any intention of taking Serbian territory nor any aggressive designs against Serbia. But the mask was speedily dropped. On the following day Count Berchtold informed the Italian Ambassador that he would reserve his attitude as to the future, and on July 30th the Austrian Ambassador at Rome told the Marquis di San Giuliano that Austria-Hungary could not promise to respect the integrity of Serbia, as it was impossible to foresee if, during the war, it would be necessary to conserve Serbian territory. Yet more illuminating light was shed on the position from Constantinople. On July 29th Mr. H. D. Beaumont reported to the Foreign Office a conversation with the Austrian Ambassador in which he had spoken of the deplorable economic situation of Salonika under Greek administration, and of the assistance which the Austrian army could count upon from the Mussulman population discontented with Serbian rule. Mr. Beaumont gathered from this that Austrian aims might extend to a punitive occupation of Serbian territory south of the Sandjak of Novi-Bazaar.

The whole manœuvre was thus laid bare. Austria-Hungary had tried many and divers means to unbar the gateway to Salonika. Serbia had resisted political provocation and commercial pressure alike; she had emerged successful from the wars of 1912 and 1913; and so it was decreed in Berlin and Vienna that a chance crime should force her to yield and loose the Teuton-Magyar hordes into the Peninsula. The time had come to strike for a free road from Vienna to Salonika and from Berlin to Baghdad. Well did the Serbian Minister

at Petrograd assure the Count Pourtalès on July 24th : "You will soon be convinced that this is not a dispute between Serbia and Austria, but a European question." The shots fired by Princhip at Sarajevo had set in motion a deep-laid German scheme to secure the hegemony of the world and strike a mortal blow at Imperial Britain.

Such, then, were the motives which dictated the composition of the Austrian Ultimatum to Serbia. Its terms provoked in Europe a sense of stupefaction greater than that created by the Sarajevo murder itself. Sir Edward Grey informed Count Mensdorff that he had "never before seen one State address to another independent State a document of so formidable a character," and it became evident to almost every statesman in Europe that the intentions of the Central Powers went much further than a mere desire to obtain satisfaction for a crime which might or might not have been hatched upon Serbian soil.

At 6 p.m. on July 23rd, 1914, Baron von Giesl presented the epoch-making ultimatum from Austria-Hungary to Serbia. It was a document of which the principal authors appear to have been Count Forgach, the notorious forger of the Friedjung documents, Count Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, and Herr Tschirsky, the German Minister at Vienna. It commenced with the following preamble :

"On the 31st March, 1909, the Serbian Minister in Vienna, on the instructions of the Serbian Government, made the following declaration to the Imperial and Royal Government :

" 'Serbia recognises that the *fait accompli* regarding Bosnia has not affected her rights, and consequently she will conform to the decisions that the Powers may take in conformity with article 25 of the Treaty of Berlin. In deference to the advice of the Great Powers Serbia undertakes to renounce from now onwards the attitude of protest and opposition which she has adopted with regard to the annexation since last autumn. She undertakes, moreover, to modify the direction of her policy

with regard to Austria-Hungary and to live in future on good neighbourly terms with the latter.'

"The history of recent years, and in particular the painful events of the 28th June last, have shown the existence of a subversive movement with the object of detaching a part of the territories of Austria-Hungary from the Monarchy. The movement, which had its birth under the eye of the Serbian Government, had gone so far as to make itself manifest on both sides of the Serbian frontier in the shape of acts of terrorism and a series of outrages and murders.

"Far from carrying out the formal undertaking contained in the declaration of 31st March, 1909, the Royal Serbian Government has done nothing to repress these movements. It has permitted the criminal machinations of various societies and associations directed against the Monarchy, and has tolerated unrestrained language on the part of the Press, the glorification of the perpetrators of outrages, and the participation of officers and functionaries in subversive agitation. It has permitted an unwholesome propaganda in public instruction. In short, it has permitted all manifestations of a nature to incite the Serbian population to hatred of the Monarchy and contempt of its institutions.

"This culpable tolerance of the Royal Serbian Government had not ceased at the moment when the events of the 28th June last proved its fatal consequences to the whole world.

"It results from the depositions and confessions of the criminal perpetrators of the outrage of the 28th June that the Sarajevo assassinations were planned in Beograd, that the arms and explosives with which the murderers were provided had been given to them by Serbian officers and functionaries belonging to the Narodna Odbrana, and, finally, that the passage into Bosnia of the criminals and their arms was organised and effected by the chiefs of the Serbian frontier service.

"The above-mentioned results of the magisterial investigation do not permit the Austro-Hungarian Government to pursue any longer the attitude of expectant forbearance which it has maintained for years in face

of the machinations hatched in Beograd, and thence propagated in the territories of the Monarchy. The results, on the contrary, impose on it the duty of putting an end to the intrigues which form a perpetual menace to the tranquillity of the Monarchy.

“To achieve this end the Imperial and Royal Government sees itself compelled to demand from the Royal Serbian Government a formal assurance that it condemns this dangerous propaganda against the Monarchy—in other words, the whole series of tendencies, the ultimate aim of which is to detach from the Monarchy territories belonging to it—and that it undertakes to suppress by every means this criminal and terrorist propaganda.”

In addition to the above indictment, further allegations were embodied in a communication made to the Great Powers on July 24th :

“On the 31st March, 1909, the Royal Serbian Government addressed to Austria-Hungary the declaration of which the text is reproduced above.

“On the very day after this declaration Serbia embarked on a policy of instilling revolutionary ideas into the Serb subjects of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and so preparing the separation of the Austro-Hungarian territory on the Serbian frontier.

“Serbia became the centre of a criminal agitation.

“No time was lost in the formation of societies and groups whose object, either avowed or secret, was the creation of disorders on Austro-Hungarian territory. These societies and groups count among their members generals and diplomatists, Government officials and judges—in short, men at the top of official and unofficial society in the kingdom.

“Serbian journalism is almost entirely at the service of this propaganda, which is directed against Austria-Hungary, and not a day passes without the organs of the Serbian Press stirring up their readers to hatred or contempt for the neighbouring Monarchy, or to outrages directed more or less openly against its security and integrity.

“A large number of agents are employed in carrying on by every means the agitation against Austria-Hungary and corrupting the youth in the frontier provinces.

“Since the recent Balkan crisis there has been a recrudescence of the spirit of conspiracy inherent in Serbian politicians, which has left such sanguinary imprints on the history of the kingdom. Individuals belonging formerly to bands employed in Macedonia have come to place themselves at the disposal of the terrorist propaganda against Austria-Hungary.

“In the presence of these doings, to which Austria-Hungary has been exposed for years, the Serbian Government has not thought it incumbent on it to take the slightest step. The Serbian Government has thus failed in the duty imposed on it by the solemn declaration of the 31st March, 1909, and acted in opposition to the will of Europe and the undertaking given to Austria-Hungary.

“The patience of the Imperial and Royal Government in the face of the provocative attitude of Serbia was inspired by the territorial disinterestedness of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the hope that the Serbian Government would end, in spite of everything, by appreciating Austria-Hungary's friendship at its true value. By observing a benevolent attitude towards the political interests of Serbia, the Imperial and Royal Government hoped that the kingdom would finally decide to follow an analogous line of conduct on its own side. In particular Austria-Hungary expected a development of this kind in the political ideas of Serbia, when, after the events of 1912, the Imperial and Royal Government, by its disinterested and ungrudging attitude, made such a considerable aggrandisement of Serbia possible.

“This benevolence which Austria-Hungary showed towards the neighbouring State had no restraining effect on the proceedings of the kingdom, which continued to tolerate on its territory propaganda of which the fatal consequences were demonstrated to the whole world on the 28th June last, when the Heir Presumptive to the Monarchy and his illustrious consort fell victims to a plot hatched at Beograd.

“In the presence of this state of things the Imperial

and Royal Government has felt compelled to take new and urgent steps at Beograd with a view to inducing the Serbian Government to stop the incendiary movement that is threatening the security and integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

“The Imperial and Royal Government is convinced that in taking this step it will find itself in full agreement with the sentiments of all civilised nations, who cannot permit regicide to become a weapon that can be employed with impunity in political strife, and the peace of Europe to be continually disturbed by movements emanating from Beograd.

“In support of the above the Imperial and Royal Government holds at the disposal of the Government a *dossier* elucidating the Serbian intrigues and the connection between these intrigues and the murder of the 28th June.”

These two comprehensive apologia which accompanied the ultimatum comprise the Austrian case and, as such, are worthy of examination. The principal accusations made against Serbia were as follows :

- (1) *That she had disregarded her 1909 declaration, as laid down in paragraph (1) of the Austrian Note.*

It must be observed that the agreement then entered into was made under duress and constituted a denial of the actualities of the political development of South Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, it cannot be disputed that the Serbian Government loyally adhered to its declaration, for neither it nor any of its organs was guilty of participation in any movement calculated to endanger good relations with its neighbour. In support of this contention it may be submitted that only once had the Austrian Government made any representation of a breach of the agreement, and upon that occasion explanations of a satisfactory nature had been received from Beograd. The allegation of official complicity could not, under any circumstances, have been substantiated.

- (2) *That she had tolerated the existence of a subversive movement which instilled revolutionary ideas into Serbian subjects of the Monarchy, which had for its object the separation of territories belonging to Austria-Hungary from the Monarchy, and which manifested itself on both sides of the frontier in the shape of acts of terrorism.*

Although the internal affairs of Serbia were surely beyond the scope of Austro-Hungarian jurisdiction, it may well be asked what "acts of terrorism" on the Serbian side of the frontier the Viennese diplomatists had in mind. If the assassination of King Alexander (who was admittedly a tool of the Habsburgs) was referred to, we are at once confronted with the postulatory theory that an interference by Serbia with Austrian propaganda on Serbian soil was an unfriendly act, and supplied with an additional and valuable demonstration of the intentions of the Monarchy towards the Serbian State. As to outrages in Bosnia, we have already noted that they were prevalent long before the Serbian renaissance set in, the tragedy of Sarajevo being merely the culmination of a series of crimes which had illumined the Austrian occupation.

It must, however, be admitted that there was present an unofficial subversive movement having for its ultimate object the union of the Yugo-Slav nationalities. It could hardly have been otherwise. Indeed, all the other border States had embarked on similar campaigns after considerably less provocation. The weakness of Austria-Hungary lay in the fact that it was an artificial Empire, a negation of the principle of nationality, made up of a minority of two ruling castes and a majority of subject peoples who owned allegiance primarily to forces beyond its frontiers. Its ultimate disintegration had been widely accepted as a political dogma, and, in consequence, it was afflicted not only with a Serbian, but with an Italian, a Russian, a Roumanian, and even a German propaganda, the object of all being to detach their co-nationals.

Moreover, the Serbs would have been blind alike to

past and to contemporary history had they not realised that the Monarchy was intent upon their destruction, national and economic, and while officially and as a whole they sought by diplomatic methods to achieve the unification of their race and an outlet to the Adriatic seaboard, some among them, more strongly imbued with the national idea, were undoubtedly carried beyond the extremes of international courtesy. To this extent, Austria-Hungary had a legitimate grievance ; but it was one which could have been satisfied by less humiliating demands than were embodied in the Ultimatum, and which *were* completely satisfied by the terms of the Serbian reply. If, at any time, the Monarchy had called attention to the ramifications of what was essentially a peaceful, and to a great extent an excusable propaganda, she would have caught the ear of Europe entire and doubtless secured such alterations in the Serbian Constitution as would have permitted the Government to check private agitation. No such step was taken.

On the other hand, the Austrian authorities themselves made no effort to remove the causes of discontent provoked by the attempt of the German and Magyar minority to control and exploit the Slav majority—a proceeding which had made the Yugo-Slav provinces such a fruitful field for the spread of sedition. After every available argument has been advanced against the Serbian nationalists, the fact remains that when an Empire breaks its plighted word—as Austria-Hungary did in 1908—and sets out to govern without respect to the rights of the governed, when it submits a subject race to the horrors of an alien, corrupt, and tyrannical administration at a time when men of the same race, speaking the same tongue, are living in liberty on the other side of a frontier, the methods employed breed their own reward.

Finally, and apart from all consideration of the evidence provided by the subsequent attitude of all sections of German and Magyar society, it is abundantly clear that a peaceful solution of the crisis was not desired, and that the intention of the Central Powers was to create a motive for militant action against Serbia in pursuance of a grandiose scheme of world-conquest.

- (3) *That she had employed Serbian journalism in the interests of the propaganda.*

It was one of the misfortunes of the Serbian Government that the Constitution deprived it of all effective control of the Press, which was free to express any sentiments provoked by the pursuit of particular political aims. They were in possession of no authority, either constitutional or legal, to influence the language of the journals, which could only be confiscated for the crimes of "lèse-majesté" or incitement to revolution. Yet it is difficult to understand in what manner the admittedly outspoken utterances of the Beograd newspapers could have materially affected the situation in Bosnia, for since the annexation crisis the entry of one after another of them into the Monarchy had been rigorously prohibited, and if their informations succeeded in reaching any important body of Austrian subjects, they must necessarily have been circulated deliberately by the official *Korrespondenz Bureau*.

It having been admitted that the language of the uncontrolled Serbian publicists was violent, what shall be said of the writings of the officially inspired scribes of the Monarchy? For a whole decade they had unceasingly maligned Serbia, heaped indignities upon the Serbian population, and acted as the instruments of an insidious campaign of calumny and invective. Throughout the Balkan wars they had treated King Peter's army with scant respect, and the events of 1914 found them busily engaged in alarming European public opinion and exciting that of their own country into a condition of jingoistic exasperation against their anathema. The Ballplatz may, of course, have considered that journalistic methods accounted highly laudable in Vienna and Budapest could not be tolerated in Beograd, but unless this one-sided contention be allowed, there would appear to have been little to choose between the two parties to this regrettable press polemic.

- (4) *That examination had shown that the Sarajevo outrage had been planned in Beograd, and that the arms and explosives employed had been pro-*

vided by Serbian officers and functionaries belonging to the "Narodna Odbrana."

In support of this contention, no further proof was advanced than the published findings of the Sarajevo courts. In most countries such testimony could have been accepted without hesitation ; but the revelations of the Agram and Friedjung trials, to say nothing of sundry less important but equally scandalous affairs, tend to support the view that, on this occasion, the circumstances called for the production of confirmatory evidence of a less impeachable character than that actually produced. Moreover, the condition of Serbia in 1914—her complete unpreparedness for war and her pressing need for peace—was universally recognised in the kingdom, and Europe would have been justified in demanding very definite corroboration before admitting that "Serbian officers and functionaries" were so ignorant of the state of their country as to deliberately aid and abet a crime so calculated to endanger satisfactory diplomatic relations with the Monarchy.

Similar comment may with reason be apportioned to the unsubstantiated claims of Serbian complicity laid out in the annexe which accompanied the Austrian Note, and also to the celebrated *dossier* "elucidating the Serbian intrigues and the connection between these intrigues and the murder of the 28th June," which was held at the disposal of the European Governments. Even for what they were, Entente statesmen were afforded no opportunity to proceed to an investigation.

"What is the good of troubling yourselves to send in a *dossier* if you do not give us time to examine it?" asked M. Sazonoff of the Austrian Ambassador.

"The results of our own inquiry are sufficient for us," replied Count Scapary.

- (5) *That the Monarchy, by its disinterested and ungrudging attitude, had made possible a considerable aggrandisement of Serbia after the events of 1912.*

The Ballplatz had previously demonstrated no apparent gift of humour, and, if this suggestion was seriously

meant, it confronts us with a further instance of that hypocrisy which so consistently marked Austria-Hungary's diplomatic treatment of King Peter's Kingdom. It suffices to recall the Empire's anti-Serbian military preparations of 1912, its demands for the evacuation of Durazzo (Dratch) and Scutari (Skadar), its creation of an independent Albania, its pact with Bulgaria and its desire to join in the Balkan conflict in 1913, to prove conclusively that Serbia's territorial aggrandisement was carried through in spite of Austria-Hungary rather than with her toleration. The claim was entirely inconsistent with the evolution of Austrian diplomacy during the previous century, and denoted the existence of a warped political vision which had much to do with the perpetuation of discord between the two States.

Stripped of the determination of the Central Powers to exploit the tragedy of Sarajevo in furtherance of Pan-German ambition, the questions at issue were reduced to a simple proposition, which was summed up with considerable clarity by the *Zeit*, one of the few Viennese journals which kept its head during the crisis :

“There are only two complaints against Serbia : the importation of bombs and enthusiasm for the Pan-Serbian idea. So far as concerns the bomb, which, in effect, came from Beograd, it was not that engine which killed the Archduke, but the ball of a Browning, an Austrian arm imported from Belgium. As to the Pan-Serbian idea, it cannot be suppressed by suppressing all the associations which propagate it. A diplomatic *démarche* cannot put down Pan-Serbism any more than Pan-Germanism or Pan-Slavism. Furthermore, the Pan-Serbian idea is only a crime in Austria, where it seeks a diminution of the State. It is not a crime in Serbia, where it seeks her aggrandisement. The only crime is propaganda by act or by anarchy, whether its object is national or social, and the duty of Serbia is to combat it with all her force. But the example of Italy demonstrates the uncertain success of the policy of repression. Let us then protect ourselves, not with a useless diplo-

matic note, but with a sound policy of nationalities and with an active and vigilant police."

The demands which formed the second part of the Austrian Note (each line of which, as Sir Maurice de Bunsen advised the British Foreign Office, had been approved by the German Ambassador in Vienna) clearly demonstrated that Austro-German diplomacy had much more extensive objects in view than the mere "putting an end to the intrigues which form a perpetual menace to the tranquillity of the Monarchy." There can be no doubt that the formulation of unacceptable conditions had been intentional and deliberate. Sir Maurice telegraphed from Vienna on July 25th that "the language of the Press this morning leaves the impression that the surrender of Serbia is neither expected nor really desired," and the inspired newspapers of the two Central Empires simultaneously urged the new theory that the Austro-Serbian conflict—which they now declared to be inevitable—was a purely local affair in which no other nation had the right to interfere. Sufficient proof that this view emanated from the Foreign Offices of Berlin and Vienna was supplied by the statement of the German Ambassador in Petrograd to Dr. Spalaikovitch, the Serbian Minister, on July 24th to the effect that it (the situation created by the Ultimatum) was a "question which must be settled by Austria and Serbia only, and in which nobody else should meddle."

In the concluding paragraph of the preamble the Austro-Hungarian Government had considered itself obliged to demand of the Serbian Government "a formal assurance that it condemns this dangerous propaganda against the Monarchy." It then proceeded to indicate the nature of the assurances required :

"In order to give a formal character to this undertaking the Royal Serbian Government shall publish on the front page of its *Official Journal* of July 13th (26th) the following declaration :

"The Royal Government of Serbia condemns the

propaganda directed against Austria-Hungary—i.e. the general tendency of which the final aim is to detach from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy territories belonging to it, and it sincerely deplores the fatal consequences of these criminal proceedings.

“‘The Royal Government regrets that Serbian officers and functionaries participated in the above-mentioned propaganda, and thus compromised the good neighbourly relations to which the Royal Government was solemnly pledged by its declaration of March 31st, 1909.

“‘The Royal Government, which disapproves and repudiates all idea of interfering or attempting to interfere with the destinies of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, considers it its duty formally to warn officers and functionaries and the whole population of the kingdom that henceforward it will proceed with the utmost rigour against persons who may be guilty of such machinations, which it will use all its efforts to anticipate and suppress.’

“This declaration shall simultaneously be communicated to the Royal Army as an order of the day by His Majesty the King, and shall be published in the *Official Bulletin* of the Army.

“The Royal Serbian Government further undertakes :

“1. To suppress any publication which incites to hatred and contempt of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the general tendency of which is directed against its territorial integrity ;

“2. To dissolve immediately the society styled ‘Narodna Odbrana,’ to confiscate all its means of propaganda, and to proceed in the same manner against other societies and their branches in Serbia which engage in propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The Royal Government shall take the necessary measures to prevent the societies dissolved from continuing their activity under another name and form ;

“3. To eliminate without delay from public instruction in Serbia, both as regards the teaching body and also as regards the methods of instruction, everything that serves, or might serve, to foment the propaganda against Austria-Hungary ;

“ 4. To remove from the military service, and from the administration in general, all officers and functionaries guilty of propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy whose names and deeds the Austro-Hungarian Government reserves to itself the right of communicating to the Royal Government ;

“ 5. To accept the collaboration in Serbia of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Government in the suppression of the subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the Monarchy ;

“ 6. To take judicial proceedings against accessories to the plot of the 28th June who are on Serbian territory. Delegates of the Austro-Hungarian Government will take part in the investigation relating thereto ;

“ 7. To proceed without delay to the arrest of Major Voislav Tankositch and of the individual named Milan Tsiganovitch, a Serbian State employé, who have been compromised by the results of the magisterial inquiry at Sarayevo ;

“ 8. To prevent by effective measures the co-operation of the Serbian authorities in the illicit traffic in arms and explosives across the frontier, to dismiss and punish severely the officials of the frontier service at Shabatz and Loznitza guilty of having assisted the perpetrators of the Sarayevo crime by facilitating their passage across the frontier.

“ 9. To furnish the Imperial and Royal Government with explanations regarding the unjustifiable utterances of high Serbian officials, both in Serbia and abroad, who, notwithstanding their official position, did not hesitate after the crime of the 28th June to express themselves in interviews in terms of hostility to the Austro-Hungarian Government ; and, finally,

“ 10. To notify the Imperial and Royal Government without delay of the execution of the measures comprised under the preceding heads.

“ The Austro-Hungarian Government expects the reply of the Royal Government at the latest by six o'clock on Saturday evening, July 25th.”

It is not too much to say that whatever sympathy for

Austria-Hungary might have been aroused in Entente diplomatic circles by the murder of the Archduke was effectively destroyed by the outrageous nature of these demands. Viscount Grey, who had never interested himself in Serbia, and who maintained that "The merits of the dispute between Austria and Serbia were not the concern of His Majesty's Government," could not refrain from pointing out to Count Mensdorff that "Demand No. 5 would be hardly consistent with the maintenance of Serbia's independent sovereignty," and considering it a matter for "great regret that a time limit, and such a short one at that, had been insisted upon at this stage of the proceedings."

As a matter of fact, both Demand No. 5 and the time limit were essential features of the deliberately planned scheme of which the Ultimatum was the outward and visible sign. The intention of the former was to invest Austria-Hungary with the right to appoint officials possessed of authority within the frontiers of Serbia, and history offered ample evidence of the uses to which the facility would have been put. The latter was cunningly elaborated to take Entente diplomacy at a disadvantage, and, if possible, secure the first object of Pan-German ambition by consent. The Central Powers did not desire war for war's sake; they regarded it, and were prepared for it, as a possibly necessary accessory to the fulfilment of their plans. They would have been admirably suited had they been permitted to secure control of the Balkans and connection with Bulgaria and Turkey by trickery and menace, for they would then have been able to husband their resources and prepare for the final blow under conditions most favourable to success. Hence the attempt to depict the Austro-Serbian dispute as a purely local affair, and the issue of an Ultimatum which demanded almost immediate reply at a time when Serbia was at her weakest and Entente diplomacy was considerably disorganised. In Serbia, M. Pashitch was in the provinces (the country was in the throes of a parliamentary election), Marshal Poutnik, the Chief-of-Staff, was in Hungary, and three other Serbian generals were on hostile soil. MM. Isvolsky and Schebeko, the

Tzar's Ambassadors at Paris and Vienna respectively, were in Russia ; the Russian and Italian Ambassadors at Berlin were absent on leave ; both Britain and Russia were represented by a *chargé d'affaires* at Beograd, and, most important of all, MM. Poincaré and Viviani, the President and Foreign Minister of the French Republic, had left Petrograd on their return to France and were actually on the high seas.

There can be no doubt that Austria-Hungary sought to profit by these circumstances. M. Sazonoff's request (to which London and Paris subscribed) for a short extension of the forty-eight hours' delay was flatly refused, and it became obvious not only that Count Berchtold was opposed to discussion, but that even if Serbia accepted the Note *in toto* he would seek other motives for the prosecution of his object and reclaim the military expenses which had been incurred by the Monarchy on its own responsibility and in support of its own Ultimatum. It is not difficult to pierce the cant of Pan-German diplomacy and lay bare the nefarious schemes of Berchtold, Tisza, Tschirsky, and their German and Magyar confederates. A kindly fate had at last placed Serbia in their hands, and they were determined either to recall the happy days of Milan, when Beograd faithfully executed the orders of the Ballplatz, or wipe the kingdom out of existence.

"After two or three conversations which I had on that day (July 24th)," reported M. Yovanovitch to his Government, "it became clear to me that an armed conflict between Serbia and the Monarchy was inevitable, even in the case of Serbia accepting all the Austro-Hungarian conditions."

M. Pashitch returned to Beograd on July 24th and the Serbian Cabinet then deliberated on the Austrian Note, after which the Crown Prince Alexander¹ telegraphed to

¹ H.R.H. the Crown Prince Alexander, Regent of Serbia. The world-war produced no more sympathetic and heroic figure than the young Prince Regent of Serbia. Promoted at the early age of twenty-six years to the headship of a small democratic State which had just embarked on the difficult task of mending the ravages of three successful campaigns and organising the administration of territorial acquisi-

the Tzar, advising him that Serbia was willing to agree to all demands which were compatible with her situation as an independent State, together with any other conditions which had well-nigh doubled its area, he had scarce time to realise the greatness which had been suddenly thrust upon him, when his country was plunged anew into bloody strife and called upon to fight for its very existence.

Born at Cettign on December 4th, 1888 (the son of Prince Peter Karageorgevitch—then a simple pretender to the Serbian throne—by his marriage with the eldest daughter of King Nicholas of Montenegro), he was taken to Geneva by his father and there received his early education in the Swiss public schools. In 1899 the family moved to Petrograd, where Alexander studied law, it having been decided that his elder brother, George, should follow a military career.

In 1903 Prince Peter was called to the Serbian throne, whereupon his family took up residence in Beograd; but Alexander was sent back to Petrograd the following year to enter the *corps des pages* of Tzar Nicholas II. In 1909 he returned again to Beograd and completed his studies under the guidance of Serbian professors.

Shortly afterwards, Prince George renounced his right of succession, and Prince Alexander became *heir-apparent*, in which capacity, with the grade of Colonel, he took command of the 1st Serbian Army at the outbreak of war with Turkey in 1912. His troops were primarily responsible for the victories of Koumanovo and Prilep, and he again led them to success on the Bregalnitz during the campaign against Bulgaria the following year.

Prior to the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary in 1914, King Peter confided to his son the Regency of the Kingdom, and in this quality he took up the responsibilities of Commander-in-Chief of the Army. With the exception of periodical visits to the front, he spent all his time at headquarters, sharing the inconveniences inseparable from active service, inspiring his soldiers with confidence, and enthroning himself in the hearts of the populace. When misfortune fell upon the land and the army became faced with the necessity of withdrawal across the Albanian mountains, his was the galvanising force which time and time again spurred on the soldiers to renewed endeavour. Never of very robust physique, the hardships of the retreat told heavily upon him, so that towards the end of the march he was obliged to undergo a serious operation in primitive circumstances, bereft of most, if not all, of the comforts and conveniences which tend to minimise the sufferings and dangers of surgical treatment.

Serious and reserved, sociable and approachable, Prince Alexander was endowed with great personal charm and was eminently fitted to preside over the destinies of the most democratic of kingdoms. He was a Serb of the Serbs, the direct descendant of the first Karageorge ("Black" George) who rallied his people against the Turks and led them in the struggle for national independence, and it must be remarked of him that he always held the Constitutional liberties and rights of the people in prime respect. With these necessary attributes of twentieth century kingship, he combined a keen knowledge of European and Balkan politics and a sound understanding of the arts and crafts of modern warfare. Of his loyalty to the Allied cause, it need only be said that, when confronted with propositions for a separate peace with Austria, he replied: "The word of Serbia is engaged and her way is marked out—to vanquish, or to die with honour."

ditions the acceptance of which might be advised by His Imperial Majesty. "We may be attacked after the expiration of the time limit by the Austro-Hungarian Army which is concentrating on our frontiers," proceeded His Royal Highness. "It is impossible for us to defend ourselves, and we beseech Your Majesty to lend us your aid as soon as possible."

It is significant that the Tzar's reply was not despatched from Petrograd until July 27th, *i.e.* two days after the rupture of diplomatic relations with Austria.

"In addressing yourself to me at a particularly difficult moment," telegraphed the Russian ruler, "Your Royal Highness is not mistaken as to my sentiments towards him and my cordial sympathy for the Serbian people.

"My most serious attention is concentrated on the actual situation, and my Government is employing every effort to smooth down the present difficulties. I have no doubt whatever that Your Royal Highness and the Royal Government, while safeguarding the dignity of Serbia, will facilitate this task by neglecting nothing in order to reach a solution which will avoid the horrors of a new war.

"As long as there is the slightest hope of avoiding bloodshed, all my efforts must be directed to that end. If, despite our sincere desire, we do not succeed, Your Highness may rest assured that in no case will Russia disinterest herself from the fate of Serbia."

This communication contained nothing to suggest that it had been held back deliberately in the Russian capital, and the only alternative assumption is that Prince Alexander's message was maliciously detained on its journey across the Monarchy.

Whatever may have been the real cause of the delay, it remains that, although M. Pashitch was doubtless aware that negotiations of an epoch-making character were being conducted by the various European cabinets, he held no promises of support when drawing up his reply to the Ultimatum, and the advice received was limited to recommendations from Petrograd, Paris, and London, all urging him to go to the last limit of concession. In no

capital—least of all in Vienna—was it imagined that Serbia was prepared to humble herself to the extent indicated by the reply which the Serbian Premier handed to Baron Giesl at 5.45 on the evening of July 25th.

“BEOGRAD, *July 25th, 1914.*

“The Royal Serbian Government have received the communication of the Imperial and Royal Government of the 10th (23rd) inst., and are convinced that their reply will remove any misunderstanding which may threaten to impair the good neighbourly relations between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Kingdom of Serbia.

“Conscious of the fact that the protests which were made both from the tribune of the national Skoupshtina and in the declarations and actions of the responsible representatives of the State—protests which were cut short by the declarations made by the Serbian Government on March 18th, 1909—have not been renewed on any occasion as regards the great neighbouring Monarchy and that no attempt has been made since that time, either by the successive Royal Governments or by their organs, to change the political and legal state of affairs created in Bosnia and Hertzegovina, the Royal Government draw attention to the fact that in this connection the Imperial and Royal Government have made no representation except one concerning a school book, and that on that occasion the Imperial and Royal Government received an entirely satisfactory explanation. Serbia has several times given proofs of her pacific and moderate policy during the Balkan crisis, and it is thanks to Serbia and to the sacrifice that she has made in the exclusive interest of European peace that the peace has been preserved. The Royal Government cannot be held responsible for manifestations of a private character, such as articles in the Press and the peaceable work of societies—manifestations which take place in nearly all countries in the ordinary course of events, and which as a general rule escape official control. The Royal Government are all the less responsible in view of the fact that at the time of the solution of a series of questions which arose between Serbia and Austria-Hungary, they

gave proof of a great readiness to oblige, and thus succeeded in settling the majority of these questions to the advantage of the two neighbouring countries.

“For these reasons the Royal Government have been pained and surprised at the statements according to which members of the Kingdom of Serbia are supposed to have participated in preparation for the crime committed at Sarayevo ; the Royal Government expected to be invited to collaborate in any investigation of all that concerns this crime, and they were ready, in order to prove the entire correctness of their attitude, to take measures against any persons concerning whom representations were made to them. Falling in, therefore, with the desire of the Imperial and Royal Government, they are prepared to hand over for trial any Serbian subject, without regard to his situation or rank, of whose complicity in the crime of Sarayevo proofs are forthcoming, and more especially they undertake to cause to be published on the first page of the *Journal Officiel*, on the date of the 13th (26th) July, the following declaration :

“ ‘The Royal Government of Serbia condemn all propaganda which may be directed against Austria-Hungary, that is to say, all such tendencies as aim at ultimately detaching from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy territories which form part thereof, and they sincerely deplore the baneful consequences of these criminal movements. The Royal Government regret that, according to the communication from the Imperial and Royal Government, certain Serbian officers and officials should have taken part in the above-mentioned propaganda, and thus compromised the good neighbourly relations to which the Royal Serbian Government was solemnly engaged by the declaration of March 31st, 1909, which declaration disapproves and repudiates all idea or attempt at interference with the destiny of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, and they consider it their duty formally to warn the officers, officials, and entire population of the kingdom that henceforth they will take the most rigorous steps against all such persons as are guilty of such acts, to prevent and to repress which they will use their utmost endeavour.’ ”

“This declaration will be brought to the knowledge of the Royal Army in an order of the day, in the name of His Majesty the King, by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Alexander, and will be published in the next official army bulletin.

“The Royal Government further undertake :

“(1) To introduce at the first regular convocation of the Skoupshtina a provision into the Press Law providing for the most severe punishment of incitement to hatred or contempt of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and for taking action against any publication the general tendency of which is directed against the territorial integrity of Austria-Hungary. The Government engage, at the approaching revision of the Constitution, to cause an amendment to be introduced into article 22 of the Constitution of such a nature that such publication may be confiscated, a proceeding at present impossible under the categorical terms of article 22 of the Constitution.

“(2) The Government possesses no proof, nor does the note of the Imperial and Royal Government furnish them with any, that the ‘Narodna Odbrana’ and other similar societies have committed up to the present criminal acts of this nature through the proceedings of any of their members. Nevertheless, the Royal Government will accept the demand of the Imperial and Royal Government, and will dissolve the ‘Narodna Odbrana’ Society and every other society which may be directing its efforts against Austria-Hungary.

“(3) The Royal Serbian Government undertake to remove without delay from their public educational establishments in Serbia all that serves or could serve to foment propaganda against Austria-Hungary, whenever the Imperial and Royal Government furnish them with facts and proofs of these propaganda.

“(4) The Royal Government also agree to remove from military service all such persons as the judicial inquiry may have proved to be guilty of acts directed against the integrity of the territory of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and they expect the Imperial and Royal Government to communicate to them at a later date the names and the acts of these officers and officials for the

purposes of the proceedings which are to be taken against them.

“(5) The Royal Government must confess that they do not clearly grasp the meaning or the scope of the demand made by the Imperial and Royal Government that Serbia shall undertake to accept the collaboration of the organs of the Imperial and Royal Government upon their territory, but they declare that they will admit such collaboration as agrees with the principle of international law, with criminal procedure, and with good neighbourly relations.

“(6) It goes without saying that the Royal Government consider it their duty to open an inquiry against all such persons as are, or eventually may be, implicated in the plot of the 28th June, and who happen to be within the territory of the kingdom. As regards the participation in this inquiry of Austro-Hungarian agents or authorities appointed for this purpose by the Imperial and Royal Government, the Royal Government cannot accept such an arrangement, as it would be a violation of the Constitution and of the law of criminal procedure ; nevertheless, in concrete cases, communications as to the results of the investigation in question might be given to the Austro-Hungarian agents.

“(7) The Royal Government proceeded, on the very evening of the delivery of the Note, to arrest Commandant Voislav Tankositch. As regards Milan Tziganovitch, who is a subject of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and who up to 28th June was employed (on probation) by the directorate of railways, it has not yet been possible to arrest him.

“The Austro-Hungarian Government are requested to be so good as to supply as soon as possible, in the customary form, the presumptive evidence of guilt, as well as the eventual proofs of guilt which have been collected up to the present, at the inquiry at Sarajevo, for the purpose of the latter inquiry.

“(8) The Serbian Government will reinforce and extend the measures which have been taken for preventing the illicit traffic of arms and explosives across the frontier. It goes without saying that they will immediately order

an inquiry and will severely punish the frontier officials on the Shabatz-Loznitza line who have failed in their duty and allowed the authors of the crime of Sarajevo to pass.

“(9) The Royal Government will gladly give explanations of the remarks made by their officials, whether in Serbia or abroad, in interviews after the crime and which, according to the statement of the Imperial and Royal Government, were hostile towards the Monarchy, as soon as the Imperial and Royal Government have communicated to them the passages in question in these remarks, and as soon as they have shown that the remarks were actually made by the said officials, although the Royal Government will itself take steps to collect evidence and proofs.

“(10) The Royal Government will inform the Imperial and Royal Government of the execution of the measures comprised under the above heads, in so far as this has not already been done by the present Note, as soon as each measure has been ordered and carried out.

“If the Imperial and Royal Government are not satisfied with this reply, the Serbian Government, considering that it is not to the common interest to precipitate the solution of this question, are ready, as always, to accept a pacific understanding, either by referring this question to the decision of the International Tribunal of The Hague, or to the Great Powers which took part in the drawing up of the declaration made by the Serbian Government on 31st March, 1909.”

It is sufficient comment on the conciliatory nature of this reply to remark that in all diplomatic circles which were working for the preservation of the peace of Europe it created a very favourable impression. Serbia had humbled her national pride to an unexpected extent and conceded practically everything that the Monarchy had required, the only reservations being in respect to the two clauses which insisted that representatives of Austria-Hungary should participate in the repression of the “subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the Monarchy” and take part in judicial investigations on Serbian soil. There was, of

course, a great deal more behind this demand than appeared on the surface. If Serbia had once admitted Austro-Hungarian officials, it is questionable whether she would have been able ever to rid herself of them. They would have become inevitably the hub of a vast organisation of espionage and corruption, eating like a canker at the heart of the nation, sapping its vitality, ever weakening it, until it became once more the poor, hapless tool of its mighty neighbour. Had Austria's intentions in this respect been straightforward, she could with confidence have accepted the Serbian offer to submit the clauses to International Arbitration ; but she well knew that the measure of unrestricted interference which she coveted would not be granted by any impartial tribunal.

Confirmation of the bellicose intentions of the Monarchy was provided by the undue haste which marked the final stage of the negotiations. M. Pashitch presented his reply to the Austro-Hungarian Minister at 5.45 p.m. on July 25th, and within fifteen minutes Baron Giesl had digested that somewhat lengthy and complicated document, despatched a notification of its unsatisfactory character, and announced his impending departure. Half an hour later he left Beograd with the personnel of the Legation.

Despite this sudden rupture of Austro-Serbian diplomatic relations, it was still hoped that the firm attitude adopted by the Triple Entente, and the British proposals for a Conference, to which further reference will be made, would prevent a European outbreak ; but all negotiations were suspended on July 28th, when Austria declared war on Serbia in the following terms :

“The Royal Government of Serbia not having given a satisfactory reply to the Note presented to it by the Austro-Hungarian Ministry on July 23rd, 1914, the Imperial and Royal Government finds it necessary itself to safeguard its rights and interests, and to have recourse for this purpose to force of arms. Austria-Hungary, therefore, considers itself from this moment in a state of war with Serbia.”

With this momentous declaration the *pourparlers*

between Vienna and Beograd were brought to a close. Both the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente were quick to recognise that not merely the Austro-Serbian, but the general European question was involved, and, while as early as July 23rd Germany had indicated to France that if the struggle was not localised she feared that dangerous friction might arise between the two groups, Viscount Grey inaugurated his proposals for mediation by Britain, France, Italy, and Germany on July 24th. The following day Viscount Grey renewed his suggestion, again insisting upon the necessity for German co-operation, and Germany, on her part, made a last attempt to localise the struggle by the extraordinary procedure of threatening that "any intervention by a third Power would have incalculable consequences." Apparently the Central Powers were satisfied that they could again attain their object by a combination of bluff and sabre-rattling, and, according to Sir Maurice de Bunsen, the German Ambassador in Vienna had expressed his conviction that Russia would keep quiet during the chastisement of Serbia. "As to Germany," Herr Tschirsky had added, "she knows very well what she is about in backing up Austria-Hungary in this matter." But any misunderstanding was speedily removed by Russia, who announced officially that "an Austro-Serbian conflict could not leave Russia indifferent" and, in addition, the Tzar's Ambassador personally informed Baron Macchio that if actual war broke out with Serbia it would be impossible to localise it, as Russia was not prepared to give way again, as she had done on previous occasions, and especially during the Bosnian Annexation Crisis. It is obvious, therefore, that Count Berchtold was fully cognisant of the grave issues involved when (doubtless with the consent of Germany) he telegraphed his declaration of war to Serbia.

On July 26th, after the return of the Emperor to Berlin, Germany shifted her ground so far as the proposed Conference of the Powers was concerned. Whereas hitherto she had made a pretence of willingness to take part in this proceeding, she now confined her activities to passing on to Vienna Viscount Grey's hope that

Austria-Hungary would take a favourable view of the Serbian reply, and declined to go beyond that. The next day an important conversation took place in London between the British Foreign Secretary and the German Ambassador. Viscount Grey then observed that the Serbian reply went farther than could have been expected to meet the Austrian demands, and pointed out that the German Secretary of State had himself declared that there were some things in the Austrian Note that Serbia could hardly have been expected to accept. He assumed that the Serbian reply could not have gone as far as it did unless Russia had exercised conciliatory influence at Beograd, and therefore suggested that it was really at Vienna that counsels of moderation were required. If Austria put the Serbian reply aside as being worth nothing and marched into Serbia, it meant that she was determined to crush Serbia at all costs, being reckless of the consequences that might be involved. He accordingly suggested that the Serbian reply should be at least treated as a basis for discussion and pause, and recommended that that course be urged at Vienna.

These views were communicated by the German Chancellor to the Austro-Hungarian Government, who had before them at the same time a Russian proposal to the effect that the means of settling the Austro-Serbian conflict should be discussed directly between the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Ambassador at Petrograd. We are thus provided with an illuminating insight into the methods of the Austro-Hungarian statesmen, for we observe that on July 28th, they simultaneously declined the Russian suggestion, declared war on Serbia, and forthwith replied that it was too late to act upon Viscount Grey's proposal because the events (which they alone had precipitated) had marched too rapidly.

With one notable exception Serbia had no concern with the further development of the European crisis. Count Mensdorff called upon Viscount Grey on July 29th. He protested that Austria had no idea of territorial aggrandisement (incidentally, it will be remembered that only twenty-four hours later the Austrian Ambassador at Rome informed the Marquis di San Giuliano that

Austria could not promise to respect the integrity of Serbia) and the British Minister replied, with manifest logic, that it would be quite possible, without nominally interfering with the independence of Serbia or taking away any of her territory, to turn her into a sort of vassal State. Count Mensdorff deprecated this remark ; but he subsequently put forward a theorem that, before the Balkan war, Serbia had always been regarded as being in the Austrian sphere of influence !

If, as this short, unsubstantiated assertion implied, Habsburg diplomacy visualised Serbia as a dependency and was incapable of appreciating the fact that she had emerged gradually out of Ottoman tutelage into national freedom, many of its otherwise incomprehensible activities are explained. Viewed from this angle, the refusal of a Customs Union, the desire to prosper and expand, the sympathy for the Austrian Serbs, the removal of the Austrophile King Alexander, and the outbursts of the Beograd Press, were indeed acts of unpardonable insubordination. But, if Count Mensdorff's declaration thus served to explain the demands made upon Serbia in the Ultimatum, it effectually exposed the hollowness of the dishonest indictment by which they were prefaced.

As a matter of fact, examined from the view-point either of the individual ambition of the Monarchy or the carefully elaborated programme of the Central Powers, Serbia (and with her the defined sense of nationality inborn in the Southern Slavs) was an obstacle to progress. Her removal, or her relegation to a position of absolute dependence upon Austria-Hungary was a first essential to the substitution of German land domination for British naval supremacy, and the evolution of Pan-German world-hegemony. The real "Provocation by Serbia" was a praiseworthy yearning after the blessings of a free and independent existence. It had no relation to the actual crime of Sarajevo, which, in effect, merely provided the Central Powers with an opportunity to draw the Serbs once more within the sphere of Austrian influence, or plunge Europe into bloodshed at a moment when the omens seemed most favourable to the realisation of their aspirations by armed force.

PART II

THE TRIUMPH

CHAPTER I

THE SERBIAN ARMY

THE Serbs have been aptly described as a race of peasant soldiers, and they entered into hostilities with Austria-Hungary fortified by a magnificent morale which was the natural legacy of their brilliant victories in the Balkan Wars. Behind them they had a long military history, a mixture of glory and misfortune, and they regarded the conflict with the Dual Monarchy as the culmination of a protracted struggle for freedom, which was destined to liberate their compatriots who had so long languished under alien rule and unite the entire Serbian nation under one king and one flag. They were a hardy race, big, blond, and of magnificent physique, living a simple, natural life in communal contentment amid their beautiful forests and fertile plains. With a certain happy-go-lucky temperament they combined a singular capacity for emotion, to which may be attributed the dash and *élan* which they invariably displayed on the field of battle. Socially and politically all were equal. There were few rich in this most democratic of lands, and, in normal times, there were no poor. All possessed sufficient for their meagre requirements. Suffrage was universal, the legal code afforded equal rights to all, and no social barrier existed to prevent the humble from rising to the highest positions in the State. In the army, also, birth and patronage were never passports to promotion, and the peasant's offspring could aspire to the command of armies. Marshal Poutnik was the son of a country schoolmaster, and Mishitch, Stephano-vitch, and other generals who earned great renown in the world-war, were sons of the soil.

Such were some of the blessings which followed the ascension of King Peter, for, during the reign of Milan and his son Alexander, Serbia lived in the ever-darkening gloom of sordid despotism and domestic strife. The last Obrenovitch régime owed fealty to Austria-Hungary, and, as a consequence, the little kingdom lived in a backwater, lost confidence in itself, lost the confidence of others, neglected its army, its education, its civic life and its internal development, and seemed destined some day to fall a hapless prey to one or other of its avaricious neighbours. Almost every phase of national progress rotted and decayed until a band of young Serbians conspired to end the reign of the last of the Obrenovitch line; and it must be admitted, in extenuation of that otherwise regrettable act, that rarely, if ever, have regrettable methods been more fully justified by the end achieved. Amply warranted by the then existing circumstances, thrice warranted by subsequent events, it ushered in a new era. Under the wise guidance of King Peter and M. Pashitch, the regeneration of the nation began, the yoke of Austria was finally discarded, the people set out to put their own house in order, bethought them of their duty to their co-nationals across the frontiers, dreamed of a kingdom worthy of the glory of Doushan, and commenced to build up an armed manhood in keeping with the tradition of Kraljevitch Marko.

In the work of military reorganisation and preparation Marshal Radomir Poutnik played the most prominent rôle, and he was materially assisted in later years by the whole-hearted support of the Crown Prince Alexander, who had not been slow to discover that the Balkan tangle was approaching its liquidation. The politicians took Piedmont as their example, and all sections combined to the creation of an army which should serve as a guarantee of national integrity and a possible medium of territorial expansion. Excepting in Austria, the patient labours of the Serbian reformers attracted little attention in Europe, so that when, after the successful formation of the Balkan League, war was engaged against Turkey in 1912, the measure of the assistance to be rendered by King Peter's Army was based rather upon the unfortunate

campaigns of 1876 (against Turkey) and 1885 (against Bulgaria) than upon the results of the national renaissance. The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 conclusively demonstrated that the Serbian Army was a factor to be reckoned with. The brilliant defeat of the Turkish Macedonian forces at Koumanovo, when Zeki Pasha's legions fled the field leaving behind them no fewer than 120 cannon, together with thousands of rifles and enormous quantities of stores and ammunition; the conquest of Monastir, when the bravery and stamina of the Serbian soldiers as they fought waist-deep in water caused foreign military attachés to describe them as "the finest infantry in Europe"; the almost superhuman triumph over the obstacles and hardships of the march through the Albanian snows to Durazzo—one of the most heroic but least sung episodes of the conflict; and the staggering blow delivered at Bulgarian aspirations on the Bregalnitz River,—all these exploits served to arouse the admiration of Europe, the animosity of Austria, and the smouldering desire for union in Yugo-Slavia.

THE ARMY ORGANISATION

The military system which in so short a period had been productive of such remarkable achievements was based upon universal military service, all able-bodied males being liable thereto from twenty-one to forty-five years of age. Substitution was illegal, and exemption was restricted to the physically unfit, the sole supporters of families, and poor peasants or artisans who were compelled to till their own soil or direct their own workshops. For the rest, the men were drafted into one or other of the branches of the service, and spent one and a half years in the infantry, or two years in the artillery or cavalry. The latter arm was recruited principally from among the wealthier town-dwellers and the yeomen, each cavalry reservist being obliged to provide his own mount in the event of war or supplementary training.

On a peace footing the army totalled about 50,000. Prior to the first Balkan War, the annual supplement was about 25,000, of whom, for reasons of economy, only some

18,000 were usually called, but with the increases of territory obtained in 1912-1913, this number was augmented, with the result that in November 1914 no less than 45,000 recruits were called up from Old and New Serbia. The first line of the active army, known as the 1st Ban, was composed of men from twenty-one to thirty years of age, after which for eight years (thirty-one to thirty-eight) they passed into the 2nd Ban. The 3rd Ban, or Territorial (Landsturm) forces (aged thirty-nine to forty-five) were made up of old soldiers and sundry semi-trained and untrained units which were incorporated under stress of war. Strictly speaking, the 2nd Ban possessed no permanent cadres, and was intended to replace the wastage in the active line; but during the Balkan Wars many independent units were formed, and in 1914 the only real distinction possessed by the 1st Ban divisions was a superiority in numbers and armament.

For the purposes of military organisation, Old Serbia was divided up into five territorial districts, viz. Danube, Shoumadia, Timok, Drina, and Morava. A similar arrangement had been planned for the provinces annexed in 1913, but the scheme was not sufficiently far advanced to permit of the use of troops drawn from these regions as independent units in the campaign under discussion, and the recruits were therefore employed for the creation of supernumerary regiments which permitted the formation of 1st and 2nd Ban divisions from each territorial district, the special "Combined" division, the Ouzhitse army, and the detachments of Beograd (Belgrade), Obrenovatz, Branitchievo, and Macedonia.

The uniform of the Army was an olive-green mixture of considerable "invisibility," the different branches of the service being distinguished by colour-tabs stitched on the collar—scarlet for the Staff, brick-red for infantry, blue for cavalry, black for artillery, and maroon for engineers. According to law, the State was only called upon to furnish uniforms for troops of the 1st Ban, but during all recent wars this principle had been extended also to the 2nd Ban. The 3rd Ban took the field in their native costumes of brown homespuns.

The infantry of the 1st and 2nd Ban were armed for

the most part with the Mauser rifle, models 1899, 1890, 1907, 1910, calibre F. 7 mm., weight $4\frac{1}{2}$ kilogrammes, with a maximum range of about 2,500 metres; but shortly after the outbreak of war an existing shortage was made good by the arrival of about 150,000 Russian service rifles. The 3rd Ban carried a Berdan rifle (non-magazine), calibre 10·65 mm., with a maximum range of 1,600 metres. The armament of the machine-gun sections was a Maxim gun, calibre 7 mm., with a maximum range of 2,000 metres.

The mobile artillery was equipped with the Creusot-Snider, 7·5 cm. cannon and a limited number of 7·5 cm. Krupp guns, captured from the Turks. The siege batteries had 12 and 15 cm. Creusot guns of the 1897 and 1907 models, and the mountain artillery was of the 7 cm. Creusot-Snider model. In addition, there existed a number of old de Bange cannon of 8 cm.

The officers of the Army were recruited from all social classes without distinction, pupils entering the Military Academy from the secondary schools at the age of eighteen years. Promotion to the Staff necessitated a further course of study which, for the most part, included a term of instruction in one or other of the great European armies. Non-commissioned officers were likewise a specially trained body, and, after having passed a certain period in the ranks, were eligible to present themselves for further examination and nomination to the grade of sub-lieutenant. The reserve of officers was drawn from among the students of the University and technical schools, and followed a special course of instruction during a sojourn of one year with the colours.

Whether in staff work or field manœuvres, the corps of officers demonstrated a natural aptitude for the art of war and amply merited the eulogy often showered upon them by impartial and critical observers. Diligent in peacetime preparation, they shared the hardships and dangers of the campaigns with their subordinates, leading assault and encouraging resistance with that disregard for personal safety, and devotion to tactical purpose, which is the hall-mark of the born soldier. With few exceptions, they cared little for the fripperies of their office, but gave them-

selves up whole-heartedly to the pursuit of victory, uninfluenced by the heavy losses which were invariably their portion. Even during the dark, demoralising days of the retreat across the Koloubara, they remained steadfast in their duty to King and Country, and time and again succeeded in extricating their commands from situations of apparent hopelessness. They possessed, too, a faculty for rough organisation and improvisation that oftentimes served their country to admirable purpose. While the clockwork precision which was so noticeable a feature behind the Allied lines in France was entirely absent—any elaborately prepared system would, indeed, have broken down before the obstacles presented by atrocious roads and uncertain transport—the Serbs had a method all their own of working out arrangements, and observers who were completely baffled by the system were, nevertheless, obliged to admit that supplies and ammunition, when available, not only arrived with the armies, but arrived to time.

The relations existing between officers and men were brotherly, democratic, and, in every respect, admirable. An ample sense of discipline was obtained without recourse to Prussian methods, and, the importance of individual responsibility having been fully appreciated, the men were taught to act upon their own initiative, and to take full advantage of local circumstances both in attack and defence.

The remarkable victories achieved by the Serbians were due in no small degree to the spirit of *camaraderie* existing between the men and their commanders and the mutual confidence in one another which had been generated by their successive triumphs in the Balkan Wars. They were an army of veterans who had come successfully through the ordeal by fire and had discovered their strength and their limitations. For them bravery and endurance had, indeed, become a settled habit. They had faith in themselves, and thus it happened, time and again, that when the outside world deemed their cause to be lost, the Serbs rose up with renewed courage and transformed impending defeat into dazzling victory.

Yet, as Austria-Hungary fully realised, save for these

attributes of courage, endurance, confidence and initiative, Serbia was to a most deplorable degree unfitted for war in 1914. Even for the campaign against Turkey in 1912 she had been ill equipped. Of her Army, only the 1st Ban were adequately supplied with the most elementary impedimenta essential for modern warfare. The 2nd Ban forces, which even then took the field as organised divisions, lacked tents, footwear, and, in many instances, uniforms. The allotment of artillery and munitions was ridiculous. The equipment of the 3rd Ban, many of whom were employed in the army of operation, was limited to a Berdan rifle of antiquated pattern and a bayonet which, from all its appearance, might have seen service in the Napoleonic wars. For the rest, the men wore their brown homespuns, sheepskin hats, and hide sandals (*opantsi*).

The wear and tear of the two Balkan Wars had left this scanty stock of material sadly reduced. A considerable number of rifles were either destroyed or seriously damaged, tents and clothing were weather-worn or otherwise rendered useless, many of the transport animals had been killed or incapacitated, stocks of ammunition had almost run out, and stores, food-stuffs, and the thousand and one incidentals that go to the completion of an army were all but non-existent. Only the artillery, despite heavy usage, remained, comparatively, undeteriorated.

The wastage was none the less marked in the ranks of the Army. Against Turkey, Serbia had mobilised $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of her population. That campaign, which, from a military point of view, was of relatively short duration, was prolonged until mid-1913 as the result of political complications, and was followed by the sudden attack of Bulgaria upon her quondam allies and a short conflict of bloody severity. The new enemy beaten, demobilisation had barely commenced when the invasion of the newly acquired territory by Albanian insurgents necessitated a further rally to the standard, and it was only in the month of November 1913 that the reservists were enabled to return to their homes. For a small peasant State, such as was Serbia, the losses suffered during these campaigns were appallingly heavy. More

than 35,000 officers and men were killed in action or died from wounds or disease, in addition to many thousands more who were totally incapacitated.

The brief period of peace which followed the signature of the Treaty of Bucharest was insufficient to permit the reparation of the wastage of war. Although orders for cannon, rifles, ammunition, stores, military impedimenta and clothing were placed with European factories, nothing save an insignificant proportion of the latter had been delivered. Many of the damaged rifles had been repaired in the national arsenal at Kragouye-vatz. There, also, 400 rounds of shrapnel per day were manufactured when raw material was available ; but, for the rest, the Serbian Army was caught in a condition of lamentable, though inevitable, unreadiness. One example may be quoted to illustrate the ultimate effect. During the battle on the Tser Mountains, many of the regiments, at an effective strength of over 4,000 men, possessed only 2,600 rifles. The armed soldiers went into action, while the unarmed waited in reserve, springing forward as their comrades fell and taking up the weapons of the fallen to continue the fight.

The mobilisation of the Serbian Army was ordered by Royal Proclamation on July 25th, and the operation commenced the following day. Forty-eight hours later, the Habsburg Monarchy declared war. King Peter's forces were, therefore, in a state of complete disorganisation, and the fact that the Austrian Staff, who had carefully chosen their own time for the opening of hostilities, did not immediately profit by the advantage they thus possessed, seize Beograd and penetrate into Serbia, was, at the time, the subject of considerable comment. Certain it is that, at the moment of the declaration, the Austrians, with the facilities for transport then at their disposal, should have been in a position to land on Serbian soil and enter the capital with a small force—say one regiment. But their sojourn would have been relatively short, for the territorial troops of the 3rd Ban had been speedily mobilised, the gendarmerie were ready for combat, and a regiment on a peace footing of about 2,000 bayonets, together with a considerable number of

volunteers, was concentrated an hour's march from the city. The difficulties of invasion increased almost hourly. Immediate measures had been taken to prepare a group of 20,000 combatants for the defence of the capital, with the result that already on the third day of the mobilisation, a force of 10,000 men and 24 cannon was concentrated within striking distance.

It appears, however, that despite the military preparations which accompanied the development of their Serbophobe policy, the Austrians were neither ready nor capable of undertaking an immediate offensive against Beograd. According to the information at the disposal of the Serbian Staff, they had, on July 28th, only one division concentrated between Semlin and Panchova—a force necessarily insufficient for an operation such as the occupation and retention of Beograd would have entailed. A few days later, thanks to the rapidity with which the Serbian concentration was effected, the enterprise would have necessitated the employment of at least an army corps. Even had this been forthcoming, however, the adventure would have been attended with considerable risk to the invaders, in view of the presence, within a two-days' march of Beograd, of a considerable and ever-augmenting hostile force.

The project would have taken on a different aspect had the Austrians decided to direct the principal force of their offensive against Beograd—an idea full of attractive, if empty glory; but, in view of the fact that their concentration was at the time incomplete, and the increasing tension of Austro-Russian relations, reasons of strategy, which will become clearly evident when the importance of the battle in the Yadar Valley is explained, caused the Austrian Staff to centre their attention upon an invasion across the Drina River, to culminate, as they hoped, in the capture of Valyevo and Kragouyevatz, and the dispersion of the Serbian Army.

THE SERBIAN CONCENTRATION

The strategy involved in an Austrian invasion of Serbia can have presented few difficulties to the Austrian

General Staff, save, perhaps, that provided by a superfluity of terrain suitable for its development. The Austro-Serbian frontier extended over a length of almost 340 miles, and was formed on the north by the Danube and Sava Rivers, and on the west by the Drina River. The water barrier was, however, an easily surmounted obstacle, for both the Sava and Drina are often of shallow depth, and abound with convenient places for the passage of a military expedition. To many of these points of vantage on the northern frontier, Austria had constructed strategic railways, thus permitting her Army to threaten the Serbs along the whole front, viz. at Bosout, Mitrovitz, Yarak, Klenak, Semlin, Krevevara (facing Smederevo) and Divitch (facing Gradishte). Obrenovatz, though in Serbian territory, was at once within a few hours' march of Semlin and the terminus of a Serbian railway, and doubtless also attracted the attention of the prospective invader.

Bosnia and Hertzegovina were yet only sparsely served by railway communications ; but, for the purposes of an invasion of Serbian territory, the lines running to Tousla in the north and to Vishegrad and Ouvatz in the south, were of great strategic importance. Moreover, unlike Slavonia, the country was of so mountainous and densely wooded a nature that the concentration of large bodies of men in close proximity to the frontier could be effectively masked.

The problem before the Serbian General Staff was more complicated. A hostile raid was to be feared at one or more of a score of points. To have sprinkled their forces along the whole frontier had been to play into the hands of the enemy ; to have presumed the probable direction of the chief offensive and massed the armies either at Valjevo, Obrenovatz, or Pozharevatz had been to disclose the Serbian concentration and permit the Austrians, with their superior réseau of railways, to pass, almost unchallenged, in another direction.

The Serbians did not, therefore, reckon on opposing any and every attempt of a hostile force to enter their country. On the contrary, strategical considerations led

them to the conclusion that a decisive defeat could only be inflicted upon the enemy after his penetration into Serbian territory. In pursuance of this idea, it was decided to place fairly strong advance-guards at all probable points of Austrian penetration, with orders to oppose any invasion as long as possible—until, in fact, the tactics of the enemy could be defined and the army moved up to offer battle.

The Serbians, at the outset, did not know where the bulk of the Austrian troops was concentrated. On broad lines, two alternatives presented themselves. The first of these provided for an invasion in force on the front Obrenovatz-Beograd-Smederevo. This line offered the shortest route to the centre of the country—the avowed objective of the enemy—but it would have necessitated a crossing of the Danube, while the Serbs could have moved up their troops by road and rail. The second alternative—an offensive on the front Obrenovatz-Ratcha-Loznitza—entailed a longer journey, but was strategically sounder in that it furnished several routes, all converging on Valyevo.

The Serbian concentration was, accordingly, dictated by the necessity of countering either of these projects, and the principal armies were therefore centrally grouped on the line Palanka-Arandjelovatz-Lazarevatz. Weaker, though important, forces were massed at Valyevo and Ouzhitse, while the advanced units, to which reference has already been made, were posted in the vicinity of Loznitza, Shabatz, Obrenovatz, Beograd, Smederevo, Pozharevatz, and Gradishte.

Despite the suddenness with which this new war had descended upon Serbia, the concentration was executed with great order and rapidity. The choice of positions so central in situation greatly facilitated the operations, and it was found possible to march most of the troops to their allotted posts. The railways were reserved for the transport of material and the conveyance of the advanced units to the frontier. Now, as in the case of the mobilisation, the experience gained in the previous wars proved to be invaluable. The advanced units arrived at their several destinations on the frontier on

the first day of the concentration, and the movement was entirely completed by August 7th.

On August 6th the Serbian Staff received information to the effect that important Austrian forces were massed in Syrmia and in North-Eastern Bosnia. Simultaneously, considerable military activity was manifested on the Danube. At Beograd, Smederevo, Gradishte, etc., the enemy maintained a vigorous bombardment, elaborately prepared to effect a crossing at many points, and picturesquely played at invasion.¹ The reports from the outposts, however, convinced the Serbian Staff that the real danger must be anticipated elsewhere. Hostile attempts to cross the Drina at Lyoubovya and Ratcha, and the Sava at Shabatz, quickly followed and were repulsed. Nevertheless, the earnestness of these efforts, as compared with the theatrical display on the Danube, suggested that the serious invasion was to be operated from the north-west; and when, on August 8th and 9th, Austrian aeroplanes whirled over Kroupagn, Shabatz, and Valyevo, the last rays of Serbian doubt and indecision were dispelled.

THE AUSTRIAN CONCENTRATION

As was subsequently ascertained, the distribution of the Austrian Army Corps exactly coincided with the conclusions which had been reached by the Serbian General Staff. Retaining but two divisions between Weisskirchen and Semlin, they had flung an imposing military cordon around the fertile Matchva district (north of a line drawn from Shabatz to Lyeschnitza) and extended other important forces along the left bank of the Drina as far south as Vishegrad.

One and a half divisions of the 7th Corps were between

¹ During a period dating from July 29th to August 11th, the Austrians made eighteen attempts to cross the frontier, their object doubtless being to divert the attention of the Serbians from those points where the serious invasion was to be effected. In some cases, pontoon bridges were thrown across to small islands situated between the two shores. In others, detachments of infantry were embarked in barges, and an effort made to row them across the river. On all occasions the attacks were easily repulsed by the troops of the 3rd Ban, often with serious loss to the invaders.

Weisskirchen and Panchova; one brigade of the 13th Corps was at Semlin; the 4th Corps, of three divisions, spread from Koupinovo to Klenak; one division of the 9th Corps was at Rouma; two divisions of the 8th Corps occupied the front Biyelyina-Yanya; one division of the 13th Corps was opposite Loznitza; one and a half divisions of the 13th Corps held the line Drinyacha-Zvornik; two brigades of the 15th Corps were at Srebrenitza; four brigades of the 15th Corps were between Focha and Vishegrad; three brigades of the 16th Corps were at Sarajevo. The Landsturm were distributed along the frontier, the 104th Brigade of four regiments (25th, 26th, 27th, 28th) being concentrated before Loznitza. Against Montenegro the Austrians sent three brigades of the 16th Corps.

During the first ten days of August a slight rearrangement of the Serbian armies took place, with the result that, at the period immediately preceding the first Austrian invasion, they were drawn up as follows:

FIRST ARMY

Commander: General Petar Boyovitch. Concentrated: Ratcha-Palanka

Division.	Composition.
Timok I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions) 6 batteries of field-artillery (24 Q.-F. guns), and 1 regiment of cavalry.
Timok II . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions) 6 batteries of field-artillery (24 Q.-F. Krupp guns), and 2 squadrons of cavalry.
Morava II . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions) and 2 squadrons of cavalry.
Corps Troops . . .	3 howitzer batteries (12 × 12 cm. Q.-F. guns) 3 siege batteries (6 × 12 cm. guns), with engineers, transport, and medical services, etc.

SECOND ARMY

Commander: General Stépan Stepanovitch. Concentrated: Aran-dyelovatz-Lazarevatz-Beograd

Division.	Composition.
Combined . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions) 3 batteries of field-artillery (12 Q.-F. guns), 3 howitzer batteries (12 Q.-F. guns), and 1 squadron of cavalry.

Division.	Composition.
Shoumadia I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions) 9 batteries, of field-artillery (36 Q.-F. guns), and 1 regiment of cavalry.
Morava I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions), 6 batteries of field-artillery (24 Q.-F. guns), 1 howitzer battery (4 Q.-F. guns), and 1 regiment of cavalry.
Danube I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions) 9 batteries of field-artillery (36 Q.-F. guns), 1 howitzer battery (4 Q.-F. guns), and 1 regiment of cavalry.
Corps Troops . . .	3 siege batteries (6 guns) with engineers, transport, medical services, etc.

THIRD ARMY

Commander : General Yourishitch-Stürm. Concentrated : Valyev

Division.	Composition.
Drina I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions), 9 batteries of field-artillery (36 Q.-F. guns) and 1 regiment of cavalry.
Drina II . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions), 3 batteries of field-artillery (12 Q.-F. guns), and 2 squadrons of cavalry.
Corps Troops . . .	2 howitzer batteries (8 × 12 cm. guns), 2 mountain batteries (12 guns), with engineers, transport, medical services, etc.

OUZHITSE ARMY

Concentrated : Ouzhitse-Baina Bashta

Shoumadia II . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions) 3 batteries of field-artillery (12 Q.-F. guns), and 2 squadrons of cavalry.
Ouzhitse Brigade . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions) 2 batteries of field-artillery (12 de Bange guns).
Corps Troops . . .	3 mountain batteries (12 Q.-F. guns) 3 mountain batteries (18 de Bange guns) with engineers, transport, medical service, etc.

DETACHMENT OF OBRENOVATZ

Concentrated : Obrenovatz.

Infantry . . .	The 7th Regiment, 2nd Battalion; 10th and the 12th Depot Regiments; 1 battalion of the 14th Depot Regiment; 5 battalions of 3rd Ban; the Yadar Company of Irregulars.
Artillery . . .	3 batteries of field-artillery (12 Q.-F. guns) 1 section of howitzers (2 guns, 1897), 2 batteries of de Bange (12 guns).

DETACHMENT OF BEOGRAD

Concentrated : Outside of Beograd

Infantry	.	.	3 regiments of 3rd Ban.
Cavalry	.	.	2 squadrons of 2nd Ban.
Artillery	.	.	3 batteries of field-artillery (12 Q.-F. guns), 1 howitzer battery (4 × 12 cm. Q.-F. guns), 1 howitzer battery (4 guns, 1897), 2 siege bat- teries 4 × 12 cm. guns, 1897). 3 batteries of de Bange (18 guns).

INDEPENDENT CAVALRY DIVISION

Concentrated : Oub

2 brigades, each composed of 2 regiments, 8 machine-gun sections, and 1 battery of horse-artillery (4 Q.-F. guns); with mounted engineers, telegraph section, pontoon train, and transport and medical services, etc.

FRONTIER TROOPS

1 regiment of 1st Ban Infantry (4 battalions), 7 regiments of 3rd Ban Infantry (21 battalions), and 13 batteries of de Bange artillery (78 guns).

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST AUSTRIAN INVASION

THE BATTLE OF THE YADAR

CONCLUSIVE evidence of the Austrian ¹ intention to attack Serbia from the west and north was provided on August 11th by active artillery preparation which, while effected over the whole front, was mainly directed against the island of Bouïoukitch near Ratcha, Mitrovitza, Shabatz, and Obrenovatz. At the same time, information was obtained of the presence of a considerable enemy concentration between Lyeshnitza and Loznitza.

Reference has already been made to the fact that the initial defence of the Drina and Sava frontiers had been confided to feeble outposts, principally composed of 3rd Ban troops. In effect, the entire force protecting the line Lyoubovya-Ratcha-Shabatz consisted only of twelve battalions, with three batteries. These were distributed as follows: One detachment covered the front Debrts-Shabatz-Ratcha-Badovintsi, a second the sector Lyeshnitza-Loznitza, a third was placed towards Lyoubovya, and an insignificant group stood in face of Zvornik. The nearest Serbian reinforcements were stationed at Oub and Valyevo, both towns being situated two days' march from the scene of action.

The first actual penetration of Austrian troops was signalled from Loznitza on the morning of August 12th. Near that town the swift-running Drina had frequently

¹ For reasons of brevity, the designation "Austria" or "Austrian" will henceforth be employed instead of "Austria-Hungary" or "Austro-Hungarian."

changed its channel, thus cutting out numerous small and wooded islands, which served to facilitate the task of the invading army. It was one of the largest of these islands, that of Kouriachista, between Loznitza and Lyeshnitza, which the Austrians chose as a base for their enterprise. Well masked by a forest and preceded by a violent artillery preparation, the enemy commenced the passage in boats and pontoons. The small Serbian frontier guard of five companies of the 3rd Ban, with two batteries of obsolete de Bange artillery, offered what little resistance lay in their power, after which, conforming to their orders, they retired to the height at Lipnitza, the nearest vantage point at their disposal.

Still taking advantage of the cover provided by the island forest, the invaders threw two bridges across the river, and during the day passed over an entire division to the Serbian shore. A similar procedure was adopted near to the island of Samourovitch, and the invasion proceeded actively until the whole of the 13th Army Corps and two divisions of the 8th Army Corps were upon Serbian soil.

Simultaneously an Austrian force crossed the river Sava north of Shabatz. Again preceding the operation by a heavy bombardment, in which the monitors played a prominent part, they first sent detachments across by the south of the island of Drenovatz, which, fortifying themselves on the Serbian shore, experienced no difficulty in driving back the portion of the 3rd Ban there stationed. This feeble defending force retired to the hills lying to the south-east of Shabatz, and the advance-guard of the Austrian 4th Army Corps occupied the town and constructed a pontoon bridge across the river from their railway terminus at Klenak. They were, however, unable to penetrate inland.

Further passages of the Drina were executed by the 42nd division of the 13th Corps and two brigades of the 15th Corps, at Zvornik and Lyoubovya respectively. In addition, the Austrians threw bridges across the river near Amaïlya and Branyevo.

It will be observed that the invasion had been carried out in a very thorough and systematic manner. Over a

frontier of some 100 to 120 miles in length, the Austrians had thrown their troops in at least six great columns, all converging on the military centre of Valjevo.

Before proceeding to a description of what, for want of a better name, is known to history as the "Battle of the Yadar," it will be necessary to sketch briefly the country over which this important engagement—the first great victory registered by the Allies—was fought and won by Serbia.

Shabatz, the north-easterly point of invasion, was a prosperous riverside town of some 15,000 inhabitants. From time immemorial it had been recognised as a centre of great strategical importance. In its vicinity there were many islands to facilitate the passage of the river, and from it many roads leading to the heart of Serbia. On its site the Romans had built a citadel; through it the Huns had passed on their journeyings north and south and south and north. In their day, too, the Turks had not only erected a powerful fortress, but also laid the foundations of a flourishing township. Modern long-range artillery, however, rendered the town itself indefensible, both from the northern shore of the Sava and from the hills lying to the south-east.

North and west of Shabatz lay the great plain of Matchva, bounded on its east and north by the Sava and on its west by the river Drina. It was a rich, fertile country, absolutely flat, but much broken up by maize-fields and woodland, in such a manner that a good field of fire could nowhere be obtained. To the south-east, undulating terrain was bisected by the river Dobrava, where excellent defensive positions were available; while due south the great mountain barrier of Tser rose like a camel's back out of the plain, and, if its western extremity of Vidoyevitza be included, stretched uninterruptedly from the Drina to the Dobrava River. Even the southbound road which cut the range climbed up and down like some mammoth switchback.

The southern slopes of Tser were less abrupt than those of the north, and descended easily into the valley of the Lyeshnitza River whence rose the lesser heights of the Iverak mountains. Both Tser and Iverak were well

covered with plantations of maize and prune-trees, intersected with patches of woodland.

Descending southward again, the foothills of Iverak were lost in a series of fairly important summits which flanked the right bank of the Yadar River—the tributary of the Drina River from which the battle under consideration derived its name.

From the left bank of the Yadar, from its junction with the Drina to Yarebitse, a great rolling plain stretched south until the giant Gouchevo Mountains, running in a south-easterly direction, rose abruptly and hid the Bosnian hills from view.

Farther south still, the country was extremely mountainous, the main roads threading innumerable valleys, where streams trickled leisurely in summer, to be changed to raging torrents by the melting snows of spring.

Of the few existent roads, those which were maintained by the State—such as that from Shabatze to Loznitza—were metalled, of excellent quality, and practicable in all weathers. Others, from Shabatze to Yarebitse, Zavlaka, Osechina and Valyevo respectively, and from Loznitza to Valyevo, Loznitza to Kroupagn, Kroupagn to Zavlaka, and Lyoubovya to Osechina, were merely well-levelled highways of mud which inevitably became impassable in wet weather for anything other than oxen transport. For the rest, communications consisted of traffic-beaten tracts across the fields, or bridle-paths over the mountains.

Offensive military operations against Valyevo, therefore, called for the possession both of the mountain heights and the few available roads.

The Austrians suffered from none of the difficulties which normally confront the invader by reason of his comparative ignorance of the terrain over which he is operating. Serbia had not only been explored time and again by the Austrian surveyors who were responsible for most of the existing maps, but, during that epoch of Serbian history when a King's treaty had reduced her to military dependence upon Austria, the country had been overrun by agents of the Habsburg Government. Since when, a highly organised spy-system had doubtless kept the records up to date.

The Austrians planned their chief advance by the valley through which runs the Yadar River to Valyevo, and for the satisfactory fulfilment of this intention, the possession of the heights of Tser and Iverak was of great strategical importance. The fact that the Serbian Army was thinned down and worn out by two previous wars, and, in the matter of equipment, was not in a condition to fight, was well known to them, and they doubtless calculated that the mass of the forces opposed to them, concentrated as they were at Lazarevatz-Arandyelovatz-Palanka, would be unable to enter the firing-line until the penetration had reached the heart of the country. Here they sadly misjudged the possibilities, for, as we shall afterwards see, the Serbians arrived on the scene of action with truly astonishing rapidity as the result of a series of long and arduous forced marches. They underrated, too, the value of morale and gave insufficient count to the fact that under the tattered uniform of the Serbian soldier there beat a hero's heart.

As to the Austrians, it must be allowed that they had taken all possible precautions to ensure a victorious issue. They wished, no doubt, to finish quickly with Serbia in order to turn their attention to, for them, the more important issues of the great war. They placed in the field an army which vastly outnumbered the forces at the disposal of their antagonist. The Serbs did not dare to detach their entire military strength towards Shabatz and the Drina. They had need to guard other vulnerable points of their frontier against invasion, and the ambiguous attitude of Bulgaria and the attempts which were being made by Bulgarian bands to destroy the railway line to Salonika—Serbia's only source of supply—necessitated the retention of fairly important units in Macedonia. Thus, in the vital stages of the battle of the Yadar, Serbia was able to engage little more than half her available strength.

Technically, also, the Austrians' superiority was strongly marked. They were equipped with all the aids of modern military science. River monitors, a plethora of heavy artillery, searchlights, petards, aeroplanes and captive balloons were all brought up to assist their well-discip-



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE "THE BATTLE OF THE YADAR"
AND THE SECOND AUSTRIAN INVASION.

lined hordes to destroy the enemy, and it would be idle to deny that all appearances tended to reinforce the feeling of confidence with which the task of reducing Serbia to military impotence was so lightly undertaken.

Immediately the news of the offensive reached Serbian Headquarters at Kragouyevatz and it was seen that the main operations were being directed against Valjevo and not down the Morava Valley, the Serbian armies began a general movement westward.

The Serbian strategy was under the direction of the Chief of the General Staff, Voivode (Field-Marshal) Radomir Poutnik.

Poutnik differed from most of his Balkan contemporaries in that he was a purely home-bred soldier, no part of his military education having been received abroad. He sprang, curiously enough, from Serbo-Austrian stock, for his father was a native of the Banat in Hungary, and emigrated to Serbia in the forties. Settling in Kragouyevatz, Poutnik *père* there followed his vocation of teacher in an elementary school, and in the year 1847 the future generalissimo was born. From early youth the young Poutnik was attracted to a martial career, and, having passed through the academy at Beograd, the war with Turkey in 1876 found him already in commission. In the subsequent campaign against the Ottoman Empire in 1877-8 he served his country as a Captain of infantry, and was one of the first officers to penetrate into the historic plain of Kossovo. Throughout the ill-starred Serbo-Bulgarian War of 1885 he held the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, and was Chief of Staff of the Danube Division, 1st Ban.

On his promotion to Colonel, Poutnik became at first Chief of the General Staff and in turn Commander of the Shoumadia Division. His reported sympathy with the Radical Party, however, now brought about his downfall, for King Milan was stoutly opposed to his officers mixing in politics. From that time until the accession of King Peter in 1903, Poutnik devoted himself to military studies and writings, and his literary efforts did more, perhaps,

to establish his reputation than his previous work in field or barracks. The restoration of the Karageorgevitch dynasty saw him promoted to the rank of General, and he speedily became the outstanding military figure in the kingdom. When not in command of a division, he occupied the portfolio of Minister of War, and in this capacity he presided over the reorganisation of the army, including the choice and purchase of war material.

At the outbreak of hostilities with Turkey in 1912, Poutnik naturally took his place at the head of the army, and received the grade of Voivode, being the first Serbian to enjoy that distinction. His confirmation in that position for the Bulgarian War of 1913 followed as a matter of course.

In appearance, Poutnik was small of stature, slight of build, and grey-bearded as became his years. He enjoyed but indifferent health, was asthmatic, and seldom left the overheated room in which he lived ; but the feeble body housed a mind of unusual brilliance, and his brightly lit eyes flashed out intelligence. In character he was inclined to be brusque, and painfully outspoken. He excelled in the selection of nicknames—usually uncomplimentary—for those about him, but was known as a sound judge of character, and chose his lieutenants with great discretion. A remarkable topographical memory greatly facilitated his task of directing the movements of the armies under his command. Politics and journalists were his *bêtes noires*. As Minister of War he was most intolerant of criticism, and usually silenced his questioners by asking them what they knew about military matters.

The arrest of Marshal Poutnik by the Austro-Hungarian authorities prior to the declaration of war was, at the time, the subject of considerable European comment. He was then returning to Serbia, and had been subjected to several hostile demonstrations *en route*. At length, on nearing Budapest, a number of persons invaded the compartment where he was resting, and—fearing that an effort was about to be made to lynch him—he attempted to draw his revolver. He was quickly informed, however, that his disturbers were detectives and that he was

under arrest. He was detained at Budapest under a double guard with fixed bayonets, but was at length advised that he was at liberty and conducted with a great show of respect to the Roumanian frontier, from whence he re-entered his own country.

Having already ascertained that the principal Austrian force had entered by the Yadar Valley, Marshal Poutnik despatched the 3rd Army, together with the bulk of the 2nd Army, in that direction, the rest of the 2nd Army being ordered to block the advance of the invaders from Shabatz.

The Austrians proceeded with the work of fortifying their bridgehead, and it was only on August 14th that they delivered an attack upon the small Serbian force which had retreated to the heights of Loznitza. It was the first engagement of the campaign, and both sides strove hard for victory. The Austrians, full of yet undamped enthusiasm, attacked vigorously, but the Serbian veterans defended stoutly, and many bayonet charges were driven off with heavy loss. Often enough the defenders were in a critical position, but they held their ground successfully, whilst awaiting the promised reinforcements. These, however, were unable to get up in time, and—having served a useful turn by delaying the enemy for a whole day—the old men fell back. Near Yarebitse they were joined by the tardy reinforcements, and the united forces proceeded to dig themselves in on a front of ten miles, extending from north to south through the town and right across the Yadar Valley. (Positions: Popovparlog (1,339 ft.)—Bogiche vitcha Kouline-Poushcarevatz-Maidan-Groblye (1,448 ft.).) The Austrians, it is interesting to note, did not follow up their attack, and the Serbs were thus able to retire and entrench themselves in undisturbed tranquillity. The next day they were joined by the rest of the 3rd Army.

Having from the outbreak of hostilities discerned the importance of driving in a wedge between Shabatz and Loznitza, Marshal Poutnik sent his cavalry in hot haste towards Matchva to investigate the situation there. The information thus obtained was of a somewhat

startling nature, for it was reported that hostile forces, coming across the plain, had been seen at points as far apart as Slepchevitch and Belareka. Any idea of attacking Shabatz was, therefore, temporarily abandoned, and the Serbian extreme right, with the Cavalry Division, received orders that, at whatever cost, the Austrians in the north must be prevented from effecting a junction with those in the Yadar Valley.

In addition, it was now for the first time learned that an Austrian column was marching northwards on Kroupagn. This was, however, according to the initial reports, but a small force; and, in consequence, a company of the 3rd Ban, together with a detachment of "Komitadji,"¹ were deemed amply sufficient to hold it in check.

With the exception of a successful attack on the position of Popovparlog, north of Yarebitse, and of a Serbian movement towards Shabatz, the two armies now occupied themselves with their concentration for the forthcoming struggle. It will have been observed that, up to this point, the Austrian march on Valyevo had been practically unopposed; but, while they were promenading along the Tser and Iverak Mountains, the Serbian armies, behind the fan-like screen which had been thrown out, were hastening westward by a series of remarkable forced marches.

Into Shabatz the Austrians were pouring their 4th Army Corps of two divisions and the 29th Division of the 9th Corps, and a flanking column, coming from the Drina, had arrived at Slepchevitch. Their 8th Corps was marching with its left towards Belareka, its centre along the crests of Tser, and its right down the Lyeshnitza Valley. The 36th division of the 13th Corps had its left on Iverak and its right in the Yadar Valley. The 42nd division of the same Corps directed its left and centre on Kroupagn,

¹ The designation "Komitadji," as applied to the Serbian fighting man, stands in need of a little explanation, for he should in no sense be confounded with his throat-cutting namesake of Turkish Macedonian days, or with the Bulgarian railway-wreckers who, since the beginning of the war, had been surreptitiously attempting to destroy the line to Salonika. The Serbian Komitadji were bands of dare-devils under the command of officers of the regular army, and were distinguished by their reckless courage on the field of battle.

while its right, with two brigades of the 15th Corps, was moving north from Lyoubovya.

On the Serbian side the Independent Cavalry Division and the right wing of the 2nd Army were developing their mission of staving off the Austrian forces in the north from a junction with those advancing on the Tser. The centre and left of the 2nd Army were marching to attack the hostile columns on Tser and Iverak, in liaison with the right of the 3rd Army, then north of Yarebitse. The centre of the 3rd Army held the positions south of Yarebitse, while its left, now split into several detachments, had been detailed off to deal with the invasion towards Kroupagn and the advance from Lyoubovya.

August 16th

The first real shock of the battle occurred on the morning of August 16th. The Shoumadia division, on the extreme right of the Serbian armies, was working northward in an endeavour to invest Shabatz, when its left flank guard discovered the presence of a strong Austrian column marching across the foothills of Tser, and presumably destined to clear the ground preparatory to a descent of the 4th Army Corps. This development might well have involved an interference with the plans of the Serbian General Staff but for the initiative and daring of Major Dyoukitch, of the 4th Artillery Regiment. This adventurous spirit asked permission to go on and meet the Austrians with but a single cannon. He might, he submitted, lose his life and the gun, but he promised meanwhile to inflict considerable damage on the enemy. He was therefore allowed to take one cannon on to the position of Gousingrob. The spectacle which there met his eyes was disconcerting. Austrian columns appeared to be overrunning the country, and he was at a loss to know in which direction to open fire. Then, throwing gunnery etiquette to the winds, he commenced to shell first one section and then another. The effect of this unexpected bombardment upon the Austrians was magical. The troops were thrown into panic, and the greatest confusion prevailed.

The first shot had been fired at 8.55 a.m., and half an hour later a messenger arrived ordering Dyoukitch to return to Slatina. In reply, he sent his Colonel an account of the situation and asked for reinforcements, following upon which he received the balance of his own battery, while a detachment of infantry, together with the Cavalry Division, were also sent forward.

The Austrians now hastily re-formed and massed on the line Belikamen-Radlovatz, and the Serbs deployed on Slatina-Metkovitch-Gousingrob. From these positions a battle royal commenced at 11 a.m. on Belikamen, and continued with ever-increasing vigour throughout the day. Towards 6 p.m. the position of the Serbs, sensibly inferior in point of numbers, was critical in the extreme; but, upon the timely arrival of assistance, they were able to resume the offensive. This counter-attack resulted in the complete rout of the Austrians, who fled the field, leaving behind them a great quantity of impedimenta, including two field-batteries. According to the statements of prisoners, their 102nd regiment was almost destroyed, and the 96th regiment had practically ceased to exist as a fighting unit.

More important than the mere local defeat of the enemy or the capture of a certain amount of material was the effect of this first success upon the ultimate result of the great battle, for it immediately and finally cut off the Austrians in Matchva from the chief theatre of operations, definitely freed the right wing of the Serbian army for action against Shabatz, and the cavalry for service in any direction which might be dictated by the march of events.

The centre of the Serbian 2nd Army—that directed against Tser—had arrived before Tekerish towards midnight on August 15th. The country thereabouts was very undulating and richly interspersed with woodland, and it was not until the advance-guard had actually arrived on the position that they perceived a strong Austrian column descending from the mountains in the same direction. The two armies, so to speak, fell on top of one another, the Serbs finding themselves in an exposed position on the rolling foothills with the Austrians towering above them, effectively sheltered by the woods.

The former deployed on the positions Bornopolye-Parlog-Lisena, with their artillery on Kik (1,161 ft.), while the Austrians developed an attack from the superior ground then in their possession. Fierce fighting continued without any distinct advantage to one side or the other until 8 a.m. on August 16th, when the Austrian artillery got the range of the Serbian left flank and forced the division back on to the line Krivaška Kosa-Ragonicha brdo-Kik (1,161 ft.). Here the timely arrival of reserves averted further catastrophe, and the troops were able to dig themselves in. The casualties of both armies were severe. The Serbs had over 1,000 men placed *hors de combat*, while the losses suffered by the Austrians included the capture of 300 prisoners and several machine-guns.

The left wing of the 2nd Army had in the meantime arrived against Iverak. The prompt and, we may assume, unexpected entrance of this division into action was due to its having executed a forced march of fifty-two miles over mountainous country and in a tropical heat during the preceding twenty-four hours. Yet it was ready at 3 o'clock on the morning of August 16th to continue its route to Popovparlog. At that hour, however, the unfavourable news was received that the Austrians had driven the right wing of the 3rd Army from that position on the previous evening, and the objective was, therefore, in the hands of the enemy.

The situation before this division (left wing of 2nd Army) was, it must be admitted, by no means clear. No news was available from the direction of Shabatz, the division before Tser had received a severe mauling during the night, the 3rd Army had lost Popovparlog, and the reports of the Austrian advance were of a disquieting nature. A consideration of these facts led the Commander to abandon his projected advance and to devote himself to the task of checking any attempt of the Austrians to push forward from Iverak. The division was accordingly entrenched on the line Beglouk-Kik (1,161 ft.), and a strong advance was thrown out towards Yougovitchi. During the morning the advance-guard attacked Yougovitchi, carried the positions, and established themselves there.

At 3 p.m. the left flank of the position—at Beglouk—was

shelled by the Austrian artillery in preparation for an attack in force which, commencing about 7.30 p.m., was successfully repulsed after one and a half hours' fighting. The enemy then flung fresh forces into the fray, and came on again at midnight. On this occasion the Serbians calmly allowed them to advance in a compact mass close up to their lines and then, after emptying their magazines at them, they charged with bombs and bayonets and hurled them back with heavy loss.

Less encouraging to Serbian arms was the experience of their 3rd Army, charged with the defence of the territory south of Iverak, for their whole line was subjected to a persistent Austrian attack. Popovparlog, as has already been observed, had been lost the night before, and the Austrians now developed a vigorous offensive in an attempt to turn the Serbian left and capture the road to Valyevo. The attack on the positions of Yarebitse commenced at daybreak. Though the hills held by the Serbians were in every way well suited to defensive operations, the approaches almost equally favoured a skilful offensive, for the summits were restricted and incapable of providing entrenched positions for more than a company or so of infantry, while the interlacing hollows afforded excellent cover under which to develop outflanking movements in comparative security.

The field of fire was, further, greatly reduced by the maize and prune-trees which are an ever-present feature of north-western Serbia. It was by deploying around the afore-mentioned hollows that the Austrians attempted to force the Serbs to withdraw from the coveted position of Yarebitse.

A frontal attack on the centre and left of the stronghold was simultaneously undertaken by a further hostile column which had advanced across the plain south of the Yadar Valley, where the depressions, sunken roads, and maize again provided adequate protection. Throughout the day the Austrians made a determined struggle for supremacy in this quarter of the theatre of war. The Serbian positions were, however, exceedingly strong, and the repeated attacks to which they were subjected were all successfully repulsed. The Serbs would, in fact,

have been able to make a protracted stand at Yarebitse but for a disconcerting development farther south, where the Austrian forces moving on Kroupagn, so far from being limited to the feeble detachments that had at first been imagined, proved to be composed of no less than three brigades of mountaineers. Reinforcements of infantry and mountain artillery were tardily hurried south, but the Austrians were able to continue their advance towards Zavlaka, and the Serbs, seeing Valyevo thus threatened, deemed retreat the wiser course, evacuated Yarebitse, and retired on to the line Maryanovitche vis-Ravnayaski vis-Groblye-Ragyeviski kamen-Schoumer, where a front could be offered to both the hostile columns.

This withdrawal was executed in perfect order, and, strangely enough, without interference. That some movement was being effected must have been obvious to the invaders, for the Serbian artillery, which had been in position on the right bank of the Yadar, was obliged to defile before the Austrian front in order to gain the main road. Yet, fortunately for the Serbians, they were allowed to pursue their retreat unmolested. By 8 o'clock the following morning (August 17th) the new line had been occupied and extended to Soldatovitcha gaïve, whence the detachment from Kroupagn had retreated.

On the day's showing, therefore, we see that although the Austrians had encountered their enemy much sooner than they had probably expected, they had nevertheless temporarily checked the Serbian counter-attack. On the other hand, the attempt to effect a junction of their forces at Shabatz with those on Tser had been baulked at the outset.

August 17th

After the engagement on Belikamen on August 16th, the Independent Cavalry Division was strengthened by detachments of infantry and artillery and ordered to pursue its important but perilous mission of penetrating between the Austrian forces at Shabatz and on the Drina. Proceeding in very extended formation, so that its left flank was based on Tser and its right on the division

operating towards Shabatz, it was able, not only to penetrate as far as Doublye and Prnyavor in the north, but to assist the column attacking Tser by a vigorous bombardment of the Austrian position on that mountain at Troyan. In fact, throughout the great battle, the cavalry rendered most noteworthy service by the manner in which, in dismounted action, it co-ordinated its movements with those of the Serbian forces acting on its wings.

The extreme right of the Serbian army, having passed the night of August 16th–17th at Slatina, now felt the way clear for a resumption of its movement towards Shabatz. The fact that they were proceeding against Austrian forces more than double their own strength served rather to encourage than to damp the ardour of the men; and, deploying in three columns, they set their course northward and pressed on light-heartedly until, on approaching the line of hills north of Yevremovatz-Prichinovitz—Yelentza, they were suddenly brought up by a heavy musketry and artillery fire coming from well-prepared earthworks.

An investigation of the situation disclosed that Shabatz had been prepared for defence *à l'outrance*. The outskirts of the town had been strongly fortified by solid fieldworks and obstacles—blind trenches, barbed wire, spiked pits, and all the artifices of modern warfare joined hands with heavy artillery to render attack by such a small force as that at the disposal of the Serbian commander a somewhat risky proceeding. It was, therefore, decided to invest the town in such a manner as to counter any attempt to leave it, and await the arrival of reinforcements.

The centre and left of the 2nd Army, now recovered from the gruelling which they had received the previous day, decided to undertake a combined movement against the mountains of Tser and Iverak respectively. The defeat administered to the Austrians on Belikamen had exercised a salutary influence on the column which had driven back the Serbian centre on the previous day, with the result that on the morning of August 17th we find them hard-pressed at Troyan, the most easterly and,

after Kosaningrad, the most important of the peaks of the Tser mountain. The Serbians prepared their attack by a well-nourished artillery fire from the south-east and, as has already been noted, from the north; and then, as is their wont, reposing their confidence in bombs and bayonets, they scaled the grassy slopes and rushed the position. This operation was effected by two regiments, the while a third, advancing along the southern slopes, took the more westerly point of Parlog. The columns made no further progress this day, the time being spent in bringing up cannon and preparing for the attack on the culminating height of Kosaningrad, where the Austrians were found to be concentrating in force.

Although the victories at Troyan and Parlog, coming hot upon the routing of the Austrians at Belikamen, may almost be said to have decided the fate of the first invasion, the enemy, probably hoping to retrieve their position at Kosaningrad, continued to drive home their advance from Iverak. The situation of the Serbian troops in that sector—the left wing of the 2nd Army—was difficult in the extreme, for their left flank was increasingly exposed by the enforced retirement of the 3rd Army. In point of fact, the only favourable military omen for them was the knowledge that the flank of their enemy was, in its turn, being threatened by the advance of the neighbouring Serbian column on Tser. It was conceivable that the moment Tser and the Lyeshnitza Valley fell into Serbian hands the pressure on their front would be relieved; but, in the meantime, the Austrians probably realised that the only strategy now open to them was to drive the forces opposed to them on Iverak rapidly eastward, and, by the persistence of their progress towards Zavlaka and Valyevo, render the possession of Tser a matter of secondary interest.

Thus, from early morning the Swaba—by which name the Austrians were known to the Serbian rank and file—undertook a vigorous onslaught on the line Beglouk-Yougovitchi. Half an hour later they had been driven off. The fighting, nevertheless, continued. The Austrians came on in swarms, and by 11 o'clock the engagement had

spread to the right wing. Towards noon the 3rd Army again reported its position as critical, and the hard-pressed flank of the 2nd Army was obliged to send reinforcements to its aid. Thus weakened, and finding its advance-guard at Yougovitchi threatened by a cleverly executed turning movement, this division began a strategic withdrawal to the heights of Kalem. The retirement was executed in good order, the Austrians contenting themselves with the occupation of Yougovitchi and the hill lying to the south-west. The Serbs entrenched in strong positions and awaited a renewal of the Austrian attack with confidence. Nothing more serious than light artillery fire was sustained, however, and the good news of the successful advance on Tser having been received, preparations were at once undertaken for a forward movement on the morrow.

We have already seen that the strength of the Austrian attack had thrown the Serbian 3rd Army on the defensive and that, in the early morning of this day (August 17th) this force had retired on to the line Maryanovitche vis-Ravnayaski vis-Groblye-Ragyevski kamen-Schoumer-Soldatovitche gaïve, where it could present a front to the Austrians advancing on Valyevo via Yarebitse and Kroupagn respectively. It might have been expected that the Austrians would take Yarebitse and then continue down the main road to Zavlaka; but the disposition of the armies, and the stubborn resistance offered by the division against Iverak, were probably the factors which led the invaders to concentrate their energies upon the extreme south of the Serbian line, attempt to pierce it and come out at Osechina. The Austrians therefore remained before Yarebitse and hurled their 42nd Division of mountain troops against the Serbian left, doubtless in an endeavour to turn it up and strike the Petska-Osechina road. The defenders were, of course, greatly outnumbered, and, as far as military equipment went, outmatched; but, despite a decisive hostile effort, they held their ground all day, and it was only towards evening that any weakening was observable. The onslaught, however, had been sufficiently severe to render a demand for assistance both logical and necessary, and

the troops stood their ground the better for knowing that reinforcements were hurrying to their aid.

August 17th, therefore, had seen both General Staffs employing the same strategy at different points. On the extreme north and extreme south of their line and over a part of their centre, the Serbians were stonewalling, while prosecuting an exceedingly vigorous advance on Tser. The Austrians, for their part, sought to overwhelm their enemy in the south and to maintain their positions in other sectors of the theatre of war. To the military student, as he looked that night at the respective positions of the two armies, at the difference in their strength and equipment, the chances would inevitably have appeared to favour the triumph of Austrian arms; but the stamina, courage, and morale of the Serbian soldier were about to claim a striking and vital victory for the Allied Armies.

August 18th

Just as the dislocation of their plans on Tser had prompted the Austrians to undertake a furious onslaught on the 3rd Army and had almost diverted the projected advance down the Yadar Valley, so it became essential that the mass of invaders penned up in the Shabatz sector should break through and endeavour to re-establish the original situation. It was quite obvious to the Serbian Staff, however, that once the penetration by the centre had failed, the Austrians would attempt to get home with the wings. This at once explains a despatch of additional reinforcements to the extreme left and the instructions given to the extreme right to entrench solidly and prepare to resist any endeavour of the Shabatz army to descend.

The right had not long to wait, for at 7 a.m. on August 18th—the morning following their unsuccessful assault on the town—they were attacked by the Austrians, who doubtless reckoned on their superior strength to crown the enterprise with success. An engagement of a most sanguinary nature at once commenced, with the employment by the Austrians of tactics which are not commonly associated with civilised warfare. Having

rounded up some 2,000 of the female inhabitants of Shabatz, including many women dragged from beds of sickness, they forced them to march in advance of the troops as cover against Serbian fire. Two Hungarian regiments were sent ahead in this manner, a Madame Gashitch (wife of a local druggist, and a student of the Magyar tongue) being obliged to act as interpreter. Once their opponents came into the open, the Serbs doggedly resisted the effort to pierce their lines, but were nevertheless forced back, step by step, contesting every foot of the way. Finally, they succeeded in wearing down the offensive, and the attacks gradually ceased. The division passed the night on the line Leskovatz-Mihana, towards Slatina.

The Independent Cavalry Division, which had intended to continue its pursuit of the Austrians towards Lyeshnitza, found itself obliged to retire to the line Metkovitch-Brestovatz. The withdrawal from before Shabatz had necessarily affected its plans, but, in addition, the fraction of the enemy which had retreated to Lipolist had there been joined by incoming reinforcements a brigade strong, and was thus able to undertake a counter-offensive. The force then opposed to the cavalry consisted of the 28th Landwehr division, with two groups of artillery and two howitzer batteries.

The Austrians, however, did not press their advance. Having by this time cultivated a wholesome respect for the Serbian cavalry, and apparently fearing that the retirement was but a ruse to lure them on to destruction, they threw out a strong advance-guard and progressed cautiously, showing no disposition to attack. They pushed ahead a little and then retired, and this going and coming continued throughout the day.

Simultaneously with the unsuccessful endeavour to throw troops from Shabatz on to Tser, the Austrians directed heavy reinforcements to the summit of Kosanin-grad in readiness for the Serbian attack on that position. They had, in addition, heavily fortified the height of Rashulatcha, which lay between the crests of Tser and Iverak, a position whence they could direct their artillery in either direction.

At this stage of the battle, the check which the division operating against Iverak had received exercised a delaying influence upon the victorious columns on Tser, for in marching ahead they not only exposed their left flank, but the assistance which they anticipated would be rendered from the south in the attack on Rashulatcha was not forthcoming. If the division moved more slowly on this account, it nevertheless progressed surely. The aid of oxen was invoked to drag the guns along the crest of the mountain, and, after a preliminary shelling, a rush was made for the position of Kosaningrad.

The Serbians, as usual, put their faith in bombs and bayonets and attacked with their customary vigour, but they failed to get home and ultimately retired. A second attack was carried out under the same conditions, and although the Austrians flung fresh troops into the fray, the Serbs pressed on and a violent combat developed. Ultimately the blue-grey line wavered, then broke, and the Austrians scattered in all directions, followed by the pursuing Serbians.

The possession of the coveted Kosaningrad paved the way for an offensive against Rashulatcha, for the position could now be both outflanked and covered by enfilade fire as well as assaulted. These were precisely the tactics adopted by the Serbian Commander. He had left a strong reserve on Troyan, and, ordering this to join up with a column which had marched along the southern slopes to cover his left wing, he directed the united detachments to storm the height the while he manœuvred on the flank. The movement was not vigorously pressed, for the probabilities were that on the morrow the division on Iverak would be able to threaten the stronghold from the south also.

The advance of this latter force had, in fact, already begun. Forming into two columns, they marched out and attacked the Austrians at Yougovitchi, and, after a prolonged and stubbornly contested engagement, drove them from their trenches. There they were subjected to an intense bombardment from batteries posted on Rein-grob and had to dig themselves in under fire. It was not to be expected that the Austrians would tamely

acquiesce in this disconcerting upset of their plans, and towards midnight they executed a determined counter-offensive. The Swaba were not, however, adepts at night-attack. The Serbs allowed them to come within short range, and then, after meeting them with point-blank magazine fire, drove them off in some confusion. The division continued to be subjected to a more or less desultory rifle-fire, and accordingly passed the night in battle order.

The same day (August 18th) the Austrians renewed the pressure on the 3rd Army, directing their attention also to the line Proslop-Rozani, where the detachment of the 3rd Ban from Lyoubovya was concentrated. Soldatoviche gaïve was the object of the initial attack of the day, and the detachment of divisional cavalry which, following a slight rearrangement of the defence, had been left in charge of the position, finding themselves overpowered, retired towards the neighbouring summit of 1,227 feet, where they strengthened the troops holding the line between that height and 1,056 feet. Against this line the Austrians massed their entire 42nd Division.

The combats over the centre of the front held by the 3rd Army continued, without any change in the situation being thereby occasioned; but, after a slight transfer of strength, the Austrians struck hard at the Serbian right, forced it back, and occupied Maryanovitche vis.

During the day the reinforcements to which reference has already been made arrived from the north, and, having directed them principally southward, General Yourishitch ordered his left to undertake a counter-offensive, with such decided effect that towards night-fall Soldatoviche gaïve had been recaptured. All ranks then felt that the moment for the forward movement had at length arrived.

From early morn on August 19th the Austrians at Shabatz, no doubt realising that the centre of the army had been thrown into retreat and that progress on their left had been effectively barred, renewed their attempt to penetrate southward. The attack was pressed with redoubled energy, so much so that, despite the stubborn resistance offered by the Serbs, they were finally driven

over on to the right bank of the Dobrava River. There was strategy in this retreat also, for the Dobrava positions were of acknowledged strength. If the Austrians advanced against them, they could, even if in greatly superior force—as they were—be dealt with to the certain advantage of the defenders ; whereas, had they continued southward towards Tser, with the object of threatening the Serbian rear on that mountain, the division could have fallen on their flank. The possibility of this last diversion was not lost upon the Austrians, and, presumably deeming it prudent to wipe out the opposition completely before proceeding on their way, they advanced against the Dobrava, where the engagement continued until nightfall.

The Austrian success continued, moreover, to act as a brake upon the movements of the Cavalry Division, which had necessarily to lie back in order to guard against any unforeseen movement on Tser from the north. They were also, for their part, threatened by the aforementioned enemy force at Lipolist, which fortunately continued its hesitating tactics of the previous day and made nothing in the nature of a definite advance—and later on they received fire from the left flank of the Austrians on Tser, who were probably reinforced by a part of the troops who had been driven out of Kosanin-grad. Although urged to continue the pursuit towards Lyeshnitza, the division was obliged, therefore, to remain on the line Belega-Souwatcha-Vitingrob. A further request for reinforcements met with a ready response from headquarters, and the division was so strengthened that it became a combined but nevertheless very mobile unit.

To the south of the Cavalry Division the Serbians continued their victorious career along the crests of Tser. Towards midday Rashulatcha fell after a series of spirited attacks, and the possibility of danger from the flank having been removed, a strong advance-guard was thrown out and ordered to pursue the enemy with all speed.

During the day an Austrian column was observed to be retreating in the Lyeshnitza Valley. They were shelled from the heights above, thrown into disorder, and badly

mauled. In the evening the advance-guard of the division had arrived near Yadranska Lyeshnitsa.

In the early morning of this day the attack against Iverak commenced in earnest, and a furious battle raged in which the Serbians drove their enemy before them over the mountain with astonishing speed. Hostilities had opened with an ineffectual counter-attack by the Austrians on Yougovitchi at 2 a.m. Three hours later the Serbian forward movement was inaugurated. The thoroughness of the victories registered by the neighbouring division on Tser of course facilitated the advance, but the Austrians, realising that their position in the north was hopeless, made a last supreme effort to register some success in the centre. The Serbians stormed and took Velika Glava at 11 a.m., but their progress was there stayed by a nourished gun-fire from the heights on Iverak to the west of Rashulatcha. A hotly contested artillery duel raged, then a fusillade spread along the whole line from Velika Glava to Kik (n. of Zavlaka) and by midday the battle was in full swing. At this juncture the Serbian left reported that the Austrians were massing in force near Kik with intention to outflank, and that the right wing of the 3rd Army was being hemmed in by a hostile turning movement. This somewhat untoward development bade fair to hinder the general advance, but headquarters came to the rescue with a reserve division, which was despatched in that direction and charged with the double task of relieving the pressure on the left of Iverak and the right of the 3rd Army.

The menace from Kik was accordingly ignored, and the right and centre columns continued their advance on Iverak. For a time the Austrians defended with partial success. At some points they retired, at others they pushed ahead, but by 4.20 p.m., when Reingrob was captured, the Serbians were masters of the situation. The Austrians, now fighting rearguard actions, delayed the pursuit a little at Popovparlog and again at Voutchiplast, but their defeat was complete and the division passed the night in four groups stretching from Voutchiplast to Kik.

The 3rd Army was again hotly engaged. Its left flank continued its advance from Soldatovitche gaive, but the Austrians continued to drive home their success at Maryanovitche vis, strove to pierce the centre of the army, and carried out an assault on the Proslop-Rozani line. Both sides exerted themselves on this, the critical day of the battle, and the fighting was continuous and intense. As the day wore on and the reinforcements which had been announced failed to arrive (they were delayed by roads so bad that the transport of impedimenta was rendered almost impossible), a strong detachment was transferred from the left to the right wing, and, by a vigorous assault, Maryanovitche vis was retaken towards evening. The Austrians were driven from the position in disorder, and left a great deal of material, including three hospitals filled with wounded, on the field. In addition, the Serbs captured a Commandant and 500 prisoners.

August 19th, therefore, may be set down as the decisive day of the struggle. Though the Austrians had made considerable headway from Shabatz and had checked the advance of the Cavalry Division, the fact that the Serbians were the undoubted masters of Tser and Iverak and that the 3rd Army had definitely undertaken the offensive robbed the invaders of their last hopes of success.

So persistent had been the Austrian attack on the Dobrava River positions that the Serbian force stationed there not unnaturally presumed that it would be resumed with undiminished energy on August 20th. The Austrians appear, however, to have abandoned all thoughts of retrieving the situation on Tser and Iverak, and even in the Shabatz theatre the idea of a further advance seems to have been given up. The attack was consequently feeble, and the Serbs were able to cross the Dobrava and establish themselves on the left bank.

The Austrians were certainly in a most unfavourable position. The great battle had, so far as the omens went, been already lost and won. The Serbian advance along Tser had at length freed the left flank of the Cavalry, and that force undertook the pursuit and fell on the rear of a retreating column. Mobile, yet strong in all

arms, they threw the enemy troops into disorder, shelled them, charged them, and drove those who escaped slaughter into panic-stricken flight. "This war is a grim business for us," said a Serbian officer who witnessed the spectacle, "but I shook with laughter to see those fellows run." The fugitives retired via Belareka and Prnyavor, hurrying through the villages in detached groups and crying out to the peasants as they went: "Where is the Drina? Where is the Drina?" They stayed to destroy Prnyavor and to commit sundry atrocities (which will be more fully dealt with in a subsequent chapter) *en route*, but by nightfall there were few of them left in the Matchva district.

The Serbian troops on Tser continued to drive the Austrians off the top of the mountain, and towards noon pushed their advance on to the adjacent summit of Vidoyevitza, where they placed a battery in position and shelled another mass of Austrians retreating in the Lyeshnitza Valley and a further contingent going towards Yanya, causing great destruction. Some detachments did, indeed, endeavour to make a stand, but they were soon overrun by their own compatriots, who crowded upon them in disordered flight.

Only once did any danger threaten the Serbs, and that was when a hostile column, yet unaffected by the general panic, came up a ravine from the direction of Chokeshina and temporarily isolated the advance-guard on Vidoyevitza. Though the Austrians proceeded manfully to the attack, they were soon overcome and joined their comrades in the rush for the security of the river.

From early morning the division operating on Iverak had been ordered to direct its attention to the Austrians retreating via the Yadar Valley and to act on their flank. The force accordingly split into three sections and advanced westward, sending detachments into the valley and consistently reinforcing them as they descended. The principal masses of Austrians were retreating along the roads to Lyeshnitza, and, the better to cover their withdrawal, they opened fire with their guns against the pursuing Serbians. This had no other result than to bring the Serbian batteries into action, under protection

of which the infantry continued the pursuit. Advance parties of volunteers were sent out to harass the Austrian rear, and the columns followed up what was, in point of fact, nothing but a precipitate flight for safety.

Thanks to the reoccupation of Maryanovitche vis the previous evening, the 3rd Army was also able to join in the common chase of the enemy. The advance continued along the whole line, the Austrians retiring towards the frontier by all available roads, with the Serbs hard on their heels.

There remained to be dealt with the Austrian forces on Kik, to the north-west of Zavlaka. The Serbian reinforcements which, it will be remembered, had been originally directed towards Maryanovitche vis, had been afterwards diverted westward, and at dawn on August 20th they approached Kik in two columns. The cross-country going was exceedingly difficult, hills and forests interspersing the land, and—even cattle transport proving impracticable—the guns were unyoked and dragged along by the infantry. Osoye was occupied by the left column without combat, but, in descending from that position, the Serbs received fire from Austrian artillery. The greatest difficulty was experienced in bringing their own batteries into action. Indeed, by 8 a.m. only one gun was in position; but at this moment the enemy ceased fire.

An hour later, two batteries belonging to the right column, which had followed a more northerly route, opened fire, and under cover of the bombardment a Serbian battalion reached the foot of the mountain. The infantry attack which then followed was received exclusively by rifle-fire, for the Austrian artillery had already been retired, and, as was subsequently discovered, the enemy maxims had been destroyed by the Serbian guns. In the height of the combat which accompanied the assault, the extreme left of the division on Iverak, which had remained to guard against possible attack from this quarter, moved against the right flank of the Austrians. Observing this, the enemy did not wait for the bayonet attack which was then in preparation, but at 10 a.m. abandoned the position and fled under a cross-fire from

the two attacking parties. Losses under such conditions are necessarily great. The Serbs buried over 600 Austrian dead on the position. They took 50 prisoners, a field hospital, and a mass of impedimenta and rifles. Their own losses were astonishingly low—7 killed and 16 wounded.

The Serbian forces now proceeded to occupy Yarebitse, after which they joined the division on Iverak in its pursuit of the enemy.

Of the events of August 20th on the Drina frontier, little need be recorded. The last remnants of the Austrian hosts were chased over the river or captured. Many lost themselves among the meadows or in the forests, whence from time to time they came in to surrender. The Serbian divisions ranged themselves along the banks of the Drina from north to south, and it remained only to drive the Austrian corps from Shabatz to free Serbian soil from the invader.

After having recrossed the Dobrava River on August 20th, the Serbs followed up their advantage and pressed on towards Shabatz. The Austrians had again occupied their old positions before the town, and a fierce engagement at once commenced. All the day of August 21st the combat raged with ever-increasing severity, and a part of the long-promised reinforcements arrived and took up a position on the Serbian left. On August 22nd a forward movement was undertaken over the whole line. The Austrians, well entrenched on their left and centre, and aided by a mass of artillery, resisted stoutly; but they had neglected the western approaches to the town, with the result that the Serb left was able to arrive before the walls before it was checked. About midday the defenders counter-attacked in the direction of the road to Varna, but were well repulsed, and the day's fighting, on the whole, left the situation unchanged.

The next day (August 23rd) the Austrians returned to the attack with increased energy. As the result of a persistent onslaught, they had begun to pierce the Serbian lines between Maïour and Yevremovatz when, at a critical moment in the engagement, reinforcements in

the shape of fresh troops were brought up and thrown into the fray. These men turned the balance, the line was re-formed, and an advance towards the town at once commenced. Similarly, the violence of the Austrian attack on the front Yevremovatz-Mishar had inflicted very heavy losses on one of the Serbian regiments, and the position there was somewhat grave until, either by good luck or good management, reinforcements turned up in that direction also. These units were immediately ordered to counter-attack, which they did to such effect that the Austrians were obliged to retire along the whole line and henceforth to adopt defensive tactics. For the remainder of the day, and far into the night, a heavy fusillade combined with machine-gun and artillery fire continued without interruption. The Serbians succeeded in tightening the cordon round the town, and little but the final stroke of victory was left over for the morrow.

During the night a number of siege-guns arrived and were placed in position. The following morning (August 24th) 98 cannon of various calibres simultaneously bombarded the Austrian trenches. The noise and effect of the cannonade were terrific, but, as it happened, superfluous, for under cover of night the Austrians, deeming further resistance useless, had evacuated Shabatz, leaving only a small covering detachment in the town. The general assault which had been ordered for midday was therefore abandoned, and at that hour a detachment of the besieging troops advanced towards the walls. At 4 p.m. they arrived on the banks of the Sava. The first Austrian invasion of Serbia had come to its inglorious end.

Excluding the reserves which came up after the climax of the battle had been reached, and which, therefore, did little more than participate in the chase of the fugitive Austrians, this, the first victory registered by the Allies in the Great War, was scored by a Serbian force little more than 160,000 strong. For the rest, the 1st Army had been retained in the vicinity of the Morava River, while the ever-increasing evidences of Bulgarian hostility had necessitated the retention in Macedonia of over two divisions—some of them, picked troops.

Great as were the efforts put forward by General Yourishitch and the 3rd Army, the outstanding figure of the "Battle of the Yadar" was General Stepanovitch, commanding the 2nd Army, the conquerors of the Tser and Iverak ranges. Stepanovitch, who was promoted to the rank of Field-Marshal for his magnificent leadership and unflinching courage in this action, was a typical peasant. Short, fat, and stumpy, he was the possessor of a round, chubby head and a deep-lined, ruddy face, cropped white hair, moustaches and goatee, and smiling blue eyes that generally radiated kindness. He spoke only the Serbian tongue, and that but rarely; but, if he liked you, he would take both your hands in his and murmur an unmistakable welcome. Towards his officers his attitude was severe and uncompromising; he made no allowance for incapacity or idiosyncrasy, and his often morose temperament and preference for his own society rendered him at all times a most difficult chief. Characteristically enough, his demeanour towards his soldiers was entirely different. He loved them as children; their comfort and well-being were his constant thought, and he became, in consequence, the idol of the rank and file.

In the piping times of peace Stepanovitch devoted much time to quiet reflection. Each day he was wont to sally forth from his home in Beograd to the remotest park of the capital, where, seating himself in a lonesome spot, he would build castles in the azure space. The arrival of an interloper would provoke a stare of undisguised annoyance, followed by a removal in search of solitude. So accustomed did the Beogradians become to this habit of one of their most famous military leaders, that a seat in the park became known as the General's own.

Stepanovitch carried the same dislike of intrusion into the war. He spoke but seldom with those around him, and, when the author was first privileged to meet him, there was erected before the little cottage which served as army headquarters a circular enclosure of empty cartridge-cases some four feet high and ten feet in diameter. In this confined space he was accustomed to pass the hot autumn days in quiet and solitary medita-

tion on the strategy of war. Ofttimes, indeed, he declined conversation with his officers for hours on end, and, the better to preserve an uninterrupted flow of thought, had his meals served within his little retreat.

Yet Stepanovitch was a great General. The castles which he built in thought were strategical plans which had a habit of materialising to the discomfiture of his enemies, and, even prior to Armageddon, he could point with pride to a record of distinguished military service. Though he added to his laurels by his brilliant defence of the Koloubara in December 1914, and by the exploits of his army during the tragic retreat nearly a year later, he will be most honoured in Serbian history as the victor of Tser.

That the unhappy result of their offensive came as an unwelcome surprise to the Austrians goes without saying. They had hoped speedily to reduce the Serbs to military impotence and then transfer the mass of their troops to other fields. They certainly did not anticipate that a little, enfeebled, and—by them—despised country like King Peter's kingdom would be able to drive out their highly organised armies in panic-stricken rout.

Following the *débâcle*, the Vienna Press Bureau, with a courage which would have proved invaluable upon the field of battle, issued the following official *communiqué* to an astonished world :

“Since, owing to the intervention of Russia into our dispute with Serbia, we find it necessary to concentrate our entire force for the great combat in the north, the war against Serbia must be considered only as a *Straf-expedition* (punitive expedition) which, for the same reason, has become a matter of secondary interest. In spite of that, and both in view of the general situation and of the false news which has been circulated by the enemy, an offensive action has been judged opportune. Yet, also for the above-mentioned reason, this operation was limited to a short incursion into the enemy's territory, after the successful accomplishment of which it was necessary to return to an attitude of expectancy, in adjourning the offensive to a more favourable occasion.

“The offensive executed by part of our troops was an action replete with bravery and heroism. Its effect was to draw upon us the entire Serbian army, the attacks of which, despite a great numerical superiority, had no result, thanks to the heroism of our troops. The fact that our troops in part suffered heavy losses should not astonish us, for our enemy possessed a numerical superiority, and was, in addition, fighting for his existence. Thus, when our troops, who had penetrated a long way into Serbian territory, received the order to regain their positions on the Drina and on the Sava, they left an enemy completely enfeebled on the field of battle.”

In addition to inflicting a tremendous blow upon the military prestige of the Monarchy, the *Strafexpedition* proved to be one of the most expensive punitive campaigns ever undertaken. The estimation of Austrian losses is somewhat difficult, as many of the fallen were not discovered until the penetrating odour of decomposed humanity disclosed the presence of bodies in wood or unharvested field. Hundreds of unnamed and uncounted warriors were thus buried where they lay. The enemy casualties were, however, necessarily heavy. In attack they had made free use of their artillery, and then, depending on mass formations to carry the positions, had flung their troops forward in compact masses, only to be mown down like ripened corn by the Serbian infantry. In their disordered retreat they time and again wandered into the valleys and were there decimated by the Serbian artillery. Their dead numbered not less than 6,000 to 8,000 and their wounded 30,000. The Serbs took 4,000 prisoners, 46 cannon, 30 machine-guns, and 140 ammunition wagons, plus a mass of rifles, field-hospitals, transport, engineers' trains, stores, and other impedimenta.

The Serbian losses were inferior, but nevertheless serious. The victory of the Yadar cost Serbia 3,000 dead and 15,000 wounded; but it stemmed the tide of invasion for three precious months, and necessitated the continued concentration in the southern theatre of the war of five Austrian Army Corps which the Teutons would fain have transferred to the battle-fields of France or Galicia.

CHAPTER III.

PUNISHMENT BY MASSACRE

THE Austrian *Strafexpedition* had resulted in ignominious failure ; the First Invasion of Serbia had ended in the headlong flight of the Imperial and Royal soldiers ; but the Serbian nation had been punished in a manner so cruel and savage as scarce finds a parallel in the blood-stained pages of Balkan history. The calamity was not, of course, so vast as that which overtook Belgium ; yet the Austrian armies “ out-Prussianed the Prussians ” in the ghastly ferocity and repugnant bestiality of the atrocities which, baulked of martial victory and smarting under inglorious defeat, they committed against the peaceful peasant population of the country they had invaded. Along the routes by which the Swaba fled for safety, they left a tragic tale of ruined villages, outraged maidens, and massacred old men, women, and children ; with them they took, as prey for their vengeance and food for their lust, thousands of so-called hostages, many of whom were brutally slaughtered ere they reached the frontier.

Even the trumpery excuse that troops had been fired on from private houses was in this case absent, for the villages were denuded of firearms, and all males, save those too young or too old, or those suffering from some physical infirmity, were with the colours. Yet frenzied Austrian soldiers, beaten on the battle-field, avenged themselves by the slaughter of defenceless women and children. And in this hellish work they were aided and abetted by Austrian officers.

It will be remembered that, in the course of the de-

scription of the battle of the Yadar, reference was made to the recapture of the position of Maryanovitche vis, when an Austrian officer and 500 men were taken prisoners. The officer in question was a Major Balzarek—a Moravian by nationality. He was afforded every courtesy and, as befitted his rank, sent to Valyevo under escort of a Serbian officer. Shortly after his departure the Serbs discovered near the position a bloody heap of eighteen persons—old men, women, and children—who had been bound together and atrociously massacred. Peasants declared that the outrage had been committed by order of Balzarek. One of the victims—an old man who had had the veins of his wrists severed and his eyes dug out—was still alive and supported the accusation. A telephone message sped along the wires which follow the road, the murderer was recalled, and, now bound and under a guard of soldiers with fixed bayonets, he was brought back and confronted with the results of his ghastly deed. Then, whining for mercy for himself and pity for his wife and family in far-off Moravia, he was conducted to Valyevo to stand his trial by court-martial. Before the door of the tribunal his cords were unloosed, when, darting a hand from pocket to mouth, he swallowed a tablet of poison, tottered, and fell at the feet of his warders.

A factor which served to augment the sufferings of the population was the advice given to the inhabitants to go quietly about their affairs when the Austrians entered. This war, they were told, differed from the two preceding campaigns in that it was being waged with a civilised European Power, and non-combatants had, therefore, nothing to fear. How mistaken were these ideas of Austrian chivalry we shall see from the recital of sordid crimes which is to follow, and which has been compiled from the statements of horrified eye-witnesses. That the butchery was condoned by Austrian officers is beyond doubt. A doctor among the prisoners stated that, prior to the invasion, officers instructed their men: "You must not leave alive even the infant in its mother's womb. You must not waste a cartridge to kill, but must pass the bayonet through and through your victims."

Further, the orders issued by the "Imperial and Royal Commandment," having regard to the "Instructions for the conduct of the troops towards the population in Serbia," constituted a direct incentive to massacre.

"You are engaged in war," read one of these instructive documents, a copy of which was found on the body of a wounded officer of the 9th Army Corps, and from which we quote: "in a hostile country inhabited by a population possessed of a fanatical hatred towards us, in a country where cowardly assassination, as the catastrophe of Sarajevo showed, is held to be permissible even by the upper classes, and where it is glorified as an act of heroism.

"In dealing with such a population any disposition towards humanity or kindness would be entirely misplaced, it would even be fraught with danger, for such sentiments, which may occasionally be exercised in time of war, would here constitute a menace to the security of our troops.

"I therefore order that during the entire course of the war an attitude of extreme severity, extreme harshness, and extreme distrust is to be observed towards everybody.

"In the first place, I will not allow persons armed, but wearing no uniform, whether encountered singly or in groups, to be taken prisoners. They must be executed without exception.¹

"In any case (in passing through a hostile village) hostages—priests, schoolmasters, and rich men—must be taken and kept until the last house has been passed, and they must all be killed if a single shot is fired at the troops in that locality.

"Any person encountered in the open, and especially in a forest, must be regarded as a member of a 'band'

¹ The true import of this paragraph will be realised when it is remembered that, as the Austrians well knew, the Serbians had not received their new uniforms, and at least one-third of their army was obliged to take the field in ordinary peasant's dress.

which has concealed its weapons somewhere, which weapons we have not the time to look for. These people are to be executed if they appear even slightly suspicious."

How thoroughly these orders were executed, and to what depths of barbarism the Austrian soldiery sank,—how they saturated their line of retreat with the blood of the innocent and the dishonour of the pure, is set out in full in the report submitted to the Serbian Government by Dr. R. A. Reiss, D.Sc., an eminent criminologist and a professor at the University of Lausanne.¹ Dr. Reiss, whom the author was privileged to accompany during most of his investigations, estimated that a total of 3,500 to 4,000 members of the civilian population fell victims to the first Austrian invasion. In nine districts alone he secured first-hand evidence that the number killed amounted to 1,300, of whom 306 were women; 116 were wounded, and 562 registered as missing. Examining the different forms of death and mutilation inflicted upon the population by the Austro-Hungarian soldiery, the investigator classified them as:

"Victims shot, bayoneted to death, killed with knives, arms lopped off, torn off, or broken, legs broken, nose cut off, ears cut off, eyes pulled out, genital organs cut off, persons hanged, victims burnt alive, one child thrown to the pigs, victims clubbed to death with butt-ends of rifles or sticks, victims impaled, victims whose skin was cut in strips.

"Very many persons were burnt alive. In the parish of Prnyavor alone they number 122. Both in the case of the killed and the wounded the injuries were inflicted on all parts of the body. The number of dead and mutilated is also very great.

"In the three aforementioned districts the various kinds of death and torture inflicted were apportioned as follows:

¹ *Austro-Hungarian Atrocities*. A Report by Dr. R. A. Reiss, D.Sc. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., Ltd. 1916.

	Males.	Females.
Victims shot	345	64
„ killed with knives	113	27
„ hanged	7	6
„ massacred and clubbed to death with sticks and butt-ends of rifles	48	26
Victims disembowelled	2	4
„ burnt alive	35	96
„ pinioned and robbed	52	12
„ whose arms were cut off, torn off, or broken	5	1
Victims whose legs were cut off or broken	3	0
„ „ noses were cut off	28	6
„ „ ears were cut off	31	7
„ „ eyes were put out	30	38
„ „ genital organs were cut off	3	3
„ „ skin was cut in strips, or por- tions of their faces detached	15	3
Victims stoned	12	1
„ whose breasts were cut off	0	2
„ cut in pieces	17	16
„ beheaded	1	0
Little girl thrown to the pigs	0	1
Victims killed without the manner of their deaths being specified	240	55

“ It should be noted that some of the victims enumerated in this statistical table suffered two or even more forms of torture. Each torture has been entered in its own category, so that the totals of the numbers entered in this table are higher than those given before for the total number of victims.

“ From all the preceding it is clear that the number of victims—children, women, young men, and old men—amounts to a comparatively high percentage of the population of the territory invaded. The evidence submitted to me also proves that the manner in which the soldiers of the enemy set about killing and massacring was governed by a system. It was the same system of extermination which is also reflected in the bombardment of open towns with shrapnel and fougasses, and in the systematic setting on fire of dwelling-houses and farm-buildings. It is impossible to look upon the atrocities that have been committed as the acts of a few apaches, such as certainly may be found in every army. This might have been believed if the number of the victims ran into several dozens, but when they have to

be counted by thousands, the excuse of misbehaviour on the part of isolated blackguard elements is no longer admissible."

To attempt in detail an account of this sordid orgy of blood-lust would simply be to recapitulate the work so ably accomplished by the neutral pen of Dr. Reiss. It will suffice, therefore, to cite herein a few extracts from the roll of infamy which fell under the personal observation of the author, and which may be accepted as emblematic of the customary procedure adopted by the enemy troops.

The mountain range of Tser practically divided the two chief theatres in which the battle of the Yadar was fought. In the northern sector the Austrians retreated westward and northward, and it is significant that between the Dobrava and the Drina rivers there stretched a chain of villages, viz. Groushitch, Tsoulkovitch, Dessitch, Belareka, Chokeshina, Lyeshnitza, and Prnyavor, in which the fugitives left their bloody mark. While every hamlet through which they passed had its story of murder, pillage, and outrage to tell, while every roadside displayed its advertisement of Austrian savagery, the first outstanding example was presented by the village of Groushitch. There all the houses were looted, the mayor and twenty others of the inhabitants—mostly young women, youths, and children—were put to death, and many of the aged males carried off into captivity.

The neighbouring village of Tsoulkovitch, through which the Habsburg soldiers retired after their first defeat on Belikamen, was the object of a special measure of this diabolical attention. As the advance-guard of the Serbians left a nearby village where they had discovered a group of three men and two old women lying with their throats cut, they entered a neighbouring ravine which offered the desolating spectacle of an indiscriminate mass of twenty-five boys, aged from 12 to 16 years, and two old women of over 60, all riddled with bullets and mutilated by bayonet-thrusts. In the village itself, one terrifying picture after another met their sickened gaze. Within a cottage, two dead women. Before the door

of another, an old woman and her daughter, both dead and half naked. Within, half sitting and half lying, haggard and slowly dying, an old wizened man, covered with bleeding wounds. "I cannot explain," he muttered, "how I can yet be living. For three days I have lain here, looking at my dead wife and child outside the door. They killed them with knife-thrusts, after having dishonoured them, and then they fled. And now I sit and watch that ever-growing pool of blood around them and am unable to move from it."

In a farther courtyard, a baby of four years, killed in the house and flung to the beasts which were devouring its little body. Near it, a young woman, naked, between the legs of whom had been placed her infant with severed throat. At a short distance, lying cold and stiff, an aged woman—probably her mother. In the house opposite, her visage distorted by death's agony, a comely young girl lying on a bed, half stripped, and bearing evident traces of outrage. On the floor by her side, her mother, bayoneted, doubtless as she strove to guard her daughter's honour; now dead and half concealed by the carpet. And the house, like all other habitations of the village, looted and wrecked from floor to ceiling.

Yet another charnel-house sheltered a heap of old men, boys, girls, and little children—all done to death by the bayonet—and among them a still living but disembowelled youth. Behind the house the corpses of two young girls, and at the end of the village a group of two maidens and three women, all with their throats cut.

The tale of horror was still unfinished, for they were yet to find two old men lying stiff and cold before the door of their cottage. Then, within a bloodstained chamber, an old woman with her six daughters; four of the girls and their mother were dead, two were still alive to tell the story. And beyond the hamlet they came on a youth who had sought refuge in a field of maize; his throat had been cut and his eyes dug out. A score of young people led off into captivity completed the terrible vengeance which the Austrians exacted from Tsoulkovitch.

At Lyeshnitsa, on August 19th, the Austrians shot fifty peasants before the eyes of an assembly of women and children of the locality, with the object of terrorising the population. They brutally murdered the son of Miloutine Pavlovitch, aged twelve, and hanged six peasants in a sheepfold belonging to Nicolas Lazarevitch. The town was pitilessly sacked; all objects which could be carted off were taken, and the rest, such as stores of grain, were soaked in petroleum and fired. Prior to the retreat, a further massacre was ordered, and over one hundred of the victims were buried in a trench dug in front of the railway station. Nearly fifty persons were led off into captivity.

Prnyavor was another of those towns which the Austrians, for some unexplained reason, singled out for special treatment. Perhaps its richness, or its clean, prosperous-looking houses, which spread the length of the main road and cut across it at right angles, aroused their ferocity; but, whatever may have been the cause, they reduced half of it to a smoking shambles. Immediately upon the entry of the Imperial and Royal soldiery, many of the male inhabitants were seized and shot in the café of Milan Miloutinovitch, and all stores were confiscated. The houses were requisitioned and everything of value removed, particular affection being shown for the bridal robes of young women. A reign of terror for the unfortunate inhabitants accompanied the occupation, and the destruction of the town followed the reception of the order to retreat. In many cases the owners of the habitations were driven inside their property before fire was applied, and thus perished in the flames, and it was no uncommon thing to discover among the débris the charred bodies of young mothers clutching their infants to their breasts. Assembling the few remaining males, the Austrians crowded them into a school and burned them alive. Fifteen young girls were shut up in the café Miloutinovitch and there subjected to similar torture. Most of the massacred girls had been previously outraged both by officers and soldiers.

At Shabatz the Austrians allowed their savagery full and unbridled licence. Possibly the presence of a strong

sprinkling of Hungarian troops, who throughout played a prominent rôle in the destruction of life and property, embittered the lot of that flourishing town ; but, whatever may have been the cause, certain it is that the fate of Shabatatz stands out in ghastly relief from the myriad crimes committed by the soldiers of the Dual Monarchy in this campaign of devastation and outrage.

The first operations were regular enough, even if disconcerting to the inhabitants. War is never fought with kid gloves, and conquered peoples must anticipate some inconvenience. The Austrians, thanks to their perfected spy system, well knew who and what they wanted. Immediately after their entry a patrol, provided with a written document, arrived in front of the house of a rich resident and demanded the delivery of the six valuable horses which occupied his stables. Later on they burnt down his house. Animals, stores of fodder and such-like were commandeered in a formal if irregular manner. Houses were occupied in accordance with the laws of warfare, and the inhabitants were assured by proclamation of their personal safety.

Presently, the official control was relaxed ; soldiers commenced to steal objects of minor value but military utility. Then followed a raid upon provisions in any shape or form, to be crowned, prior to evacuation, by the general looting of the town. Not a house nor a shop escaped this desperate pillage. Every habitation was ransacked from floor to ceiling, and everything of value was carted off across the Sava. One lady's wardrobe was despoiled by officers who had occupied her house ; even her pet dog was stolen, evidently not without a feeling of shame on the part of the thieves, for they left a note in mock apology and stated where the animal could be found after the war. Shops were turned inside out and their contents thrown into the streets ; banks and offices were wrecked, and safes prised open in the manner of professional cracksmen, and their contents rifled. In fact, the appearance of the town suggested that an army of expert burglars had descended upon it, to be disturbed with the job still unfinished. Drawers and cupboards had been hurriedly sacked and

their contents scattered about in the search for valuables, and they were left standing open amid the litter of the rooms, no time having been available even to close them. A strange, cruel air of devastation pervaded the streets, where merchandise, phonographs, broken furniture, and safes lay cheek by jowl with wine and spirit barrels whose contents had been let run to waste along the cobbled gutters. Tangled telephone-wires and heaps of fallen masonry joined in the mêlée, for Shabatz had been effectively destroyed.

Incessant shell-fire wrecked all the public edifices and hundreds of houses and shops, and what the guns failed to accomplish Austrian soldiers completed with the torch. The fine old church (which served as a stable during the occupation) was pitilessly bombarded and stood, the centre of a scene of destruction, resembling nothing so much as the effect of some tremendous earthquake. The noble prefecture was riddled by shot and shell, and the same description applied to countless habitations in all directions. Of the extensive artillery barracks, only the four walls were left standing.

Reference has been made in the previous chapter to the fact that the Austrians, on sallying forth to meet the Serbs, collected some 2,000 of the female inhabitants and placed them in front of the troops as a living screen from Serbian fire. Most of the young women were afterwards shut up in a local hotel, whence they were conducted from time to time by soldiers with fixed bayonets to the quarters of officers, where they served to satiate the lust of their captors.

In the yard of the ruined church a crowd of peasants were tied together, then slaughtered by the bayonet, and finally tossed in a huddled mass into a trench which had been dug for their reception. No living native saw the crime committed, no record remains to tell who the victims were or why they were murdered; but when the Serbs re-entered, they opened the tomb (in the presence of the author) and exhumed the mutilated bodies of their compatriots. And, though the Austrians took away private citizens as hostages, they killed the soldiers whom they had captured in the field, in cold blood, and

left them lying,—a bleeding, repugnant reception for the victors. Thus, in the property of M. Gatchitch, at the entrance to the town, twenty executed prisoners were left in the courtyard, and nigh a score of others in the stables. A third group of thirty soldiers were killed by the bayonet and the bodies thrown on top of one another into a café, where they lay in a huddled mass until the Serbs entered and buried them.

In the region of the Yadar Valley similar, if less extensive, massacres marked the Austrian retreat.

At Poushcarevatz, Maïdan, and Draghintse, pillage, outrage, and murder were freely indulged in. From Yarebitse six young girls were led off as hostages; an old man was burned alive; the throats were cut of a mother and her four children; all the inhabitants of one home, including a baby of two and a child of ten years of age, were killed. Many women were outraged.

At Sipoulya three boys under ten, and two aged twelve and seventeen years respectively, and two girls under twenty years of age, were found bound together and stabbed to death. Near them lay a peasant—killed and mutilated.

Zavlaka presented the horrible spectacle of a group of two girls, four children, and twelve old men and women, all with their throats cut.

The victims in some others of the villages in this region were as follows:

Village.	Adults.	Average Age.	Children.	Average Age.
Ghouritse . . .	6	47	1	8
Tsikoti and Krivaïtza	25	53	2	4
Dvornitza . . .	19	49		
Moikovitch . . .	5	53	2	3½
Chlivoir . . .	9	49		
Slave . . .	5	44		
Baslavi . . .	5	52		

The details of the crime of Major Balzarek, and the story of the enormities committed at Brziak, in the Yadar Plain, are embodied in the report of a mixed

Commission, of which we give a translation from the French :

Translation of the Report of the Commission nominated by the Military Commandant of the Drina Division and by the Prefect of the Department of Valjevo, to investigate the crimes committed near Zavlaka and Brziak ; the Commission composed of Yanitchie Krassoyevitch, Dr. Svetislav Nicolayevitch of Beograd Dr. Arius van Tienhoven of The Hague, and Jules Schmidt of Geneva.

(1)

On August 21st, 1914, the Commission was taken from the village of Krivalya, situated on the road Valjevo-Loznitza, into a meadow lying at the foot of a hillock about 400 to 500 yards from the road. In the meadow, close to a brook, lay the bodies of fifteen persons of divers ages and both sexes, on top of one another in the position in which they had died. Twelve of the bodies had the hands tied behind the back, and, in addition, were roped together with a long cord.

In the same meadow, at a short distance from the above group, the bodies of three men of advanced age lay stretched out on the ground.

An examination of these victims demonstrated that they had been first ill-treated, then partly bound and mutilated, and afterwards killed by blows delivered with the butt-ends of rifles, by bayonet-thrusts, and gun-fire.

Before the bodies were touched, the group was photographed in presence of the Commission and of Major Joseph Balzarek of the 16th Regiment of the Austro-Hungarian army, who had been taken prisoner in proximity to the said village of Krivalya.

The following is a list of the victims and visible wounds :

(1) SPOMENKA TCHOSSITCH, female, aged 16 years. Skull fracture 15 cm. long ; a portion of brain matter exuded from the wound. This victim had, in addition, received three bullets in the chest and one in the arm. The body was photographed.

(2) MIRNA TCHOSSITCH, female, aged 58 years. Two bullet-wounds in the chest and a wound in the left thigh 15 cm. deep, which appeared to have been administered by the bayonet.

(3) SARAH TSEROTCHEVITCH, female, aged 50 years. Examination

of the body disclosed a bullet-wound in the chest, and in each thigh a wound 15 cm. long and 6 to 7 cm. deep, produced by a knife-like instrument. Below the hip a slice of flesh the size of a man's hand had been cut off with a knife. The victim was photographed.

(4) MILIANA BLAGOJEVITCH, female, aged 50 years. Bullet-wounds in chest, and a wound in left side of neck 10 cm. long, 6 cm. wide, and 10 cm. deep, exposing the lungs and arteries. This body was photographed.

(5) THOMAS TSERATCHENITCH, male, aged 50 years. Two gunshot wounds in chest, and a wound in left side of neck 10 cm. long, 6 cm. wide, and 10 cm. deep, exposing the lungs and arteries. This body was photographed.

(6) TSVEKO BLAGOJEVITCH, male, aged 14 years. Bullet in chest; a deep wound in neck, and a wound in left armpit, both produced by a knife-like instrument.

(7) MILOSH STEFANOVITCH, male, aged 60 years. Chin and lower jaw completely smashed; bullet-wounds in chest and stomach—bones of left knee broken.

(8) STOJACHINE BLAGOJENITCH, male, aged 13 years. Bone of right leg broken below knee; gunshot wounds in hip and lower stomach.

(9) VOUKOSSAVA TSEROTCHEVITCH, female, aged 18 years. Wound on left side of neck, extending from lower jaw to shoulder; lower jaw broken; long wound on wrist and forearm.

(10) KROMANIA BLAGOJENITCH, female, aged 18 years. Bayonet-thrust in right breast and bullet-wound in left breast; further gunshot wounds in lower stomach and right thigh; skull fractured, and patch of flesh torn off from left hip.

(11) STANKA TSEROTCHENITCH, female, aged 25 years. Right hip broken; gunshot wounds in neck and left breast.

(12) LAZARE TSEROTCHENITCH, male, aged 48 years. Right leg broken; large wound on left leg; two gunshot wounds in chest.

(13) STANKO BLAGOJEVITCH, male, aged 15 years. Bullet in right hip and chest; several fractures of the skull.

(14) GWANIA BLAGOJEVITCH, female, aged 12 years. Gunshot wounds in chin; skull broken.

(15) KRSTA BLAGOJEVITCH, aged 45 years. Right hip fractured; gunshot wounds in stomach and chest.

(16) MILAN BELIJITCH, male, aged 52 years. Bullet-wounds in chest, stomach, and head.

(17) DRAGITCH RELIJITCH, aged 52 years. Bullet-wounds in neck and left eye.

(18) PETKO JOKSIMONITCH, aged 27 years. Gunshot wounds in stomach and right eye.

The first fifteen victims were natives of the village of Simina brdo and the other three of Zavlaka.

All the gunshot wounds were occasioned by bullets fired at close range, as evidenced by the fact that they bore traces of burns.

(2)

On August 22nd the Commission left the village of Brziak, situated on the road Valyevo-Loznitza, and

visited a meadow about 500 yards from the road. There, in a ditch, lay five corpses : a father, a mother, and their three daughters, all mutilated and massacred.

- (1) LAZARE PETROVITCH, aged 40 years, of Brziak.
- (2) MILITZA PETROVITCH, his wife, aged 40 years, of Brziak.
- (3) DAKIA PETROVITCH, his daughter, aged 18 years, of Brziak.
- (4) ANGELINA PETROVITCH, his daughter, aged 14 years, of Brziak.
- (5) STANOIKA PETROVITCH, his daughter, aged 12 years, of Brziak.

Stretched out near the bodies and tied to the feet of Stanoika lay a dead dog.

This group was photographed in presence of the Commission.

(3)

In a field of maize, 100 yards from this group, a freshly covered grave bordered the roadside. The Commission ordered the grave to be opened, and from it were taken five bodies which had been thrown pell-mell into it. The tomb was so shallow that the topmost bodies were above ground. The Commission established that these victims were :

- (1) SIMA YESDITCH, aged 14 years, of Brziak.
- (2) ANIZA YESDITCH, aged 30 years, of Brziak.
- (3) ANGELINA PAVLOVITCH, aged 13 years, of Brziak.
- (4) DRAGITCH PAVLOVITCH, aged 14 years, of Brziak.
- (5) JULIA TOMITCH, aged 14 years, of Brziak.

All were killed and mutilated.

(4)

The same day the Commission visited a cottage some seventy yards distant from the grave above referred to and there found the body of a young woman, identified as Miroslava, wife of Milarad Petrovitch, of Brziak. This body was stretched out on a bed, the legs apart and partly nude. Medical examination proved that the victim had been violated by a considerable number of individuals. Death had followed a bayonet-thrust in the left breast.

All the victims were identified by their relations and controlled by the municipal records.

Throughout the territory visited by the Commission the members found that all the belongings of the inhabitants, such as beds, wardrobes, chairs, tables, sewing-machines and even stoves, had been smashed to pieces and thrown outside the houses. The Commission also discovered that all domestic animals which it was impossible to consume or lead off had been killed.

According to the declaration of the inhabitants and the municipal authorities, it was demonstrated that similar crimes as above recorded had been committed in all the villages occupied by Austro-Hungarian troops, but the Commission is of opinion that the official investigation of the preceding cases is amply sufficient to prove that they were not isolated examples, but a systematic work of vengeance.

We, the undersigned, declare that the investigation of the crimes committed at Simina brdo and Brziak was made in our presence on August 21st and 22nd, and that the statement which is here made is in entire conformity with what we saw.

(Signed) ARIUS VAN TIENHOVEN, Doctor in Medicine.
JULES SCHMIDT, Engineer.
YANITCHIE KRASSOYEVITCH.
DR. SVETISLAV A. NICOLAYEVITCH.

In such fashion was the chastising of Serbia accomplished. The recital is incomplete ; it is merely a record of the most notable of the well-authenticated cases where, for the most part, the mutilated bodies themselves supplied the evidence, and there is little wonder that, when the Imperial and Royal troops next invaded Serbia, the inhabitants fled their homes *en masse* and, shelterless and starving, sought sanctuary behind the Serbian lines. Such ghastly deeds as have been enumerated stand in need of little comment, but, at the conclusion of his afore-quoted report, Dr. Reiss offers the following explanation of what he describes as an outbreak of "Sadie frenzy :"

“ Both evidence and documents also attest the fact of premeditation and of a very long preparation. The consequences of this preparation were not slow in making themselves felt. The Austro-Hungarian soldiers, finding themselves on Serbian territory and face to face with these people who had always been represented to them as barbarians, were frightened. It was from fear, lest they should be massacred themselves, that they probably perpetrated their first cruelties.

“ But, at the sight of blood, the phenomenon took place which I have often had occasion to observe : man was transformed into a bloodthirsty brute. A positive access of collective Sadic frenzy seized upon the troops, the type of frenzy which every one who has attended a bull-fight has been able to observe on a small scale. Once the bloodthirsty and Sadic brute was unchained and let loose by his superiors, the work of destruction was duly carried out by men who are fathers of families and probably kindly in private life.

“ Thus the responsibility for these acts of cruelty does not rest upon the privates—mere victims of the instinct of the wild beast, which slumbers in every human being—but on their superior officers, who failed to restrain these tendencies ; nay, I will say even more, who aroused them.

“ The massacres were all the more readily committed by the Austro-Hungarian soldiers, as they were stimulated by the prospect of gain by pillage, which was permitted and even commanded by their superior officers. Those who from a sentiment of dignity did not wish to take part in the massacring and looting were probably drawn into it by the fanatical Bosnian Mohammedan peasants, those professional plunderers by whom the high command took good care to have the troops accompanied while on the march.

“ In short, it is beyond all doubt that the massacres of the civil population and the pillage were systematically organised by the command of the army of invasion ; it is upon the command that all the responsibility must rest, and also the disgrace with which, for all time to

come, this army has covered itself—the army of a people which claimed to be at the head of civilisation, a people which desired to impose its ‘Kultur’ on others who did not desire it.

“Events have justified the attitude of those who refused to accept this ‘Kultur.’”

CHAPTER IV

THE EXPEDITION IN SYRMIA

THE failure of the Serbian Staff to order the immediate pursuit of the routed Austro-Hungarian army after the battle of the Yadar was the subject of much adverse comment in some quarters. That the enemy was a beaten rabble when he crossed the frontier rivers is beyond doubt, and the obvious course was to follow up the victory and run the fugitives to earth. It must be conceded, however, that Marshal Poutnik and his advisers were fully alive to the importance of driving home their advantage to the hilt, and that very weighty reasons intervened to persuade them to call off their troops. The known circumstances of the situation, as it presented itself to the General Staff, were as follows :

No part of the Army had been awaiting the attack in the theatre of hostilities. The troops which bore the brunt of the fighting had, on the contrary, been obliged to undertake a series of forced marches before they made contact with the enemy, and, once on the scene, they entered into a fierce and prolonged combat with a determined and well-equipped foe. The lot of the divisions which had been held in reserve and which came into action towards the end of the battle, was, in effect, even harder, for they had been marched about from one sector to another as the fortunes of battle dictated, and finally entered the arena after their powers of resistance had already undergone a certain strain. Ere the invaders had been chased back into Austro-Hungarian territory the Serbs were, therefore, more or less physically exhausted.

This fact taken alone, however, would have provided

no adequate excuse for the subsequent Serbian inactivity. The Austrians were no less fatigued than were they, and, for the rest, a few days' repose would have served to reinvigorate the men. There were other and more potent reasons, originating in that Serbian unreadiness for war to which concrete reference has already been made, and which had a serious and decisive bearing upon the situation. Among these, the shortage of rifles was not the least important. The Yadar battle had, of course, been fought and won despite this deficiency; but an incursion into enemy country would possibly have necessitated the employment of all the reserve forces in the firing-line, and it was precisely those reinforcements which had hitherto remained, unarmed, in the rear. With the exception of the seven battalions of the Timok II Division, which received the first consignment of Russian rifles and were thus enabled to save the situation before Shabatz, the reserves had entered into combat armed with the guns of their fallen comrades.

The third and most important reason lay in the absence of the material necessary to effect a crossing of the rivers. The Drina was no ordinary waterway. Rising in the tors of the Bosnian hills and periodically fed by important tributaries, it rushed northward to its junction with the Sava. Ever swift, often torrential, it had washed out a bed of imposing width, and, by a constant cutting of new courses, had created a series of deltas. The local facilities for the construction of pontoon bridges consisted of boats, barges, and the curious water-mills which were a feature of this territory. These latter were erected upon two pontoons, the larger of which, moored to the bank, carried a primitive grinding-mill, while the smaller, separated from its tender by a waterwheel, supported the outside end of the shafting. At different stages of the war both armies dismantled these installations, flung the mills and wheels into the river, and commandeered the pontoons for the purposes of bridge building. In the particular period under discussion, however, the Austrians had had the advantage of first choice. Profiting by their unopposed advance, they had seized and utilised every suitable floating structure, and, despite the precipitate

nature of their retreat, they had, fortunately for them, succeeded in massing the boats on their own shore. The Serbians, it is true, possessed their military pontoon trains ; but, with the exception of those captured from the Turks at Koumanovo in 1912, these were composed of inferior wooden constructions and were not only inefficient, but insufficient for the number of bridges which offensive operations in Bosnia necessitated.

Finally, it was ever incumbent upon the Serbians to bear in mind the fact that, from the very commencement of hostilities, they had put every available man into the field. They had no latent reserve, and they were engaged in a life-and-death struggle with a foe whose resources were, at that time, almost boundless. It was, therefore, necessary for them to husband their strength, and the knowledge that to cross the Drina was to risk, however slightly, decimation at the hands of an army standing on the defensive in its own country, acted as a powerful and legitimate deterrent.

The objections to the pursuit of the Austrians across the Sava were more limited. The facility with which the crossing was effected a fortnight later demonstrated that a penetration into Syrmia offered no great difficulty, and it is possible that a comparatively mean Serbian force would speedily have swept the plain clear of Austrian soldiers and, in view of the demoralisation existing in the ranks of the opposition, the capture of the Frushkagora Mountains themselves might then have been cheaply accomplished. The operation would, of course, have been attended with certain risks, but these could not then have included the immediate possibility of a flank attack from the Drina. Had the counter-offensive been successfully carried out, the repercussion in Europe would have been inestimable, and the devotion of the Hungarians to the Teuton cause would have been subjected to a severe and perhaps fatal strain. But—and now we come to the crux of the whole question—it is doubtful whether the Serbian force would have been sufficiently strong to hold the ground. The front susceptible to attack would have been thereby considerably increased, and the challenge to the Austrian Empire would certainly have provoked

immediate reprisals, which might very conceivably have resulted in disaster.

With Serbia cleared of the enemy, two alternatives lay before Marshal Poutnik. The one was to retire from the exposed positions along the river and entrench his troops strongly on the strategic position—a line which would have encompassed the Yagodnya-Boranya-Gouchevo Mountains, the western extremities Iverak and Tser, Vidoyevitza, the northern slopes of the Tser range, and the hills to the south-east of Shabatz. The other was to echelon his forces along the western and north-western frontiers. He chose the latter. It is worthy of notice that up to this time the immense importance of certain summits of the Yagodnya-Boranya-Gouchevo heights does not appear to have been adequately appreciated by either side. The summits of Gouchevo—to take a particular instance—absolutely control the Yadar plain as far eastward as Yarebitse, and at a later date thousands of Austrian and Serbian lives were sacrificed in a struggle to obtain predominance thereon. Yet the Austrians failed to fortify the position on their first penetration, the Serbians ignored it after their victory, and it was only when the second invasion had been checked that the Austrians established themselves there in force, with the result that, until their retirement some six weeks later, the Serbs kept practically a whole division engaged in a continuous and sanguinary effort to drive them from it.

It is only reasonable to assume that Poutnik's decision to line the frontier and thus risk a hostile concentration against any of his many weak points was dictated by the massacres committed and the devastation caused by the Austrians during the first invasion. This outburst of barbarism came as a complete surprise to all sections of the Serbian people. They had not been brought up in any ultra-squeamish school, for the tragedies of Turkish domination were still remembered by some, and the story of the horrors committed by the Bulgarians in 1913 was familiar to all. Yet in 1914 even officers left their wives and families in frontier towns without undue concern, basing their misplaced optimism on a belief that they

were on this occasion warring against the soldiers of a civilised monarchy, whose consideration for non-combatants would be second only to their valour upon the battle-field. How terribly they erred has been shown in a preceding chapter. A concentration on what may be designated the strategic frontier would, moreover, have delivered up the rich and fertile Matchva district to the mercy of the Austrian marauders at a time when it was known that some enemy corps had already been transferred to the Galician theatre, and when there was reason to suppose that no further offensive would be undertaken for some considerable time.

Therefore, although subsequent events were to demonstrate that the attempt to hold Matchva and the little triangular track of Serbian soil west of the Yagodnya-Boranya-Gouchevo Mountains was tactically unsound, General Poutnik nevertheless decided to spread his divisions over a front which followed the course of the Drina and Sava rivers from Lyoubovya right round to Shabatz in the following order :

THIRD ARMY

Detachment of Lyoubovya . . .	N.W. and S.E. of river Lyoubovya.
A combined detachment under Colonel Mishitch . . .	Village Donia Koslye-River Triyeshnyitza.
Morava II	River Triyeshnyitza - Brasinski Han.
Drina I	Brasinski Han-River Zeravia.
Drina II	River Zeravia-Lyeshnitza.

SECOND ARMY

Combined division	Lyeshnitza-Begovtsi (S. of Bado-vintsi).
Morava I	Begovtsi-Bosout.
Timok II	In reserve in Matchva.
Shoumadia I	Shabatz.
Timok I	In reserve in Matchva on line Lipolist-Douvanishte.
Independent Cavalry Division .	In Matchva.

Danube I Division remained south of Beograd in support of the detachment charged with the defence of the capital, while the Danube II Division held its original concentration at Pozharevatz.

The bracketing of the divisions into Armies indicates the composition of each army after the battle of the Yadar. The 1st Army then consisted of the two Danube divisions, the Ouzhitse army continued to hold its conquests in Bosnia, and the "Detachment of Beograd" and the "Detachment of Obrenovatz" maintained their respective positions as independent units.

During the twelve days which followed the termination of the battle of the Yadar a comparative calm pervaded the entire front. At least one of the Austrian Army Corps (4th Corps, of 3 Divisions) was known to have been withdrawn; the others had been sadly battered, and all available evidence combined to suggest that the Habsburg Government had, as their amusing post-Yadar *communiqué* suggested, adjourned a renewal of their offensive to a more favourable occasion. In the meantime, Russian operations in Galicia had progressed with almost un hoped-for rapidity and success, and a great Austrian army had been utterly routed at Lemberg. At this time a general tendency to underrate the military resources of Austria-Hungary had developed, and the Serbs were themselves eager to prosecute the combat on foreign soil. They were greatly encouraged in this ambition by the Allies, and, after a week's repose, the Headquarters Staff commenced to elaborate plans for carrying the war over the border.

What was ultimately called the "Expedition in Syrmia" was in reality but the first and necessary phase of an intended general invasion of Bosnia. While the strengthening of the Austro-Hungarian forces in Bosnia by drafting down troops from the north was rendered exceedingly difficult by reason of the scarcity of railways, the réseau of communications in Syrmia would have permitted the speedy concentration of considerable numbers of the enemy on the Serbian frontier lying between the Drina River and Beograd. Marshal Poutnik's first object was, therefore, to protect the western half of his northern border by seizing the territory lying between the Drina River and the Danube and establishing himself in strength upon the dominating mountain-range of Frushkagora. He would then have hindered the reinforcement of the

Austrian army in Bosnia and Hertzegovina, and could have proceeded with his offensive in those Yugo-Slav provinces in comparative security. The idea was rendered more attractive by the known fact that the enemy forces in Syrmia were by no means strong, and consisted only of the 29th Division of the 9th Army Corps and 38th and 68th Infantry Regiments of the common army, the 21st Jäger battalion, the 12th, 13th, 17th, and 28th Landsturm regiments, and 6 to 8 "battalions de marche."¹

The task of invading Syrmia was entrusted to the 1st Army, composed for the purpose in hand of the Danube I, Shoumadia I, and Independent Cavalry Divisions. On the left wing, support was to be rendered by Timok I Division, while the unit known as the "Detachment of Beograd" was to co-operate on the right. Danube II was moved up to Obrenovatz, and the rest of the Serbian forces remained on their old positions on the Drina.

The object of the movement was to sweep the territory lying between the Danube and the Sava clear of the enemy and to establish the Serbian forces in strength upon Frushkagora. Incidentally, it was hoped that the invasion would attract northwards the Austrian Army Corps which were still recuperating west of the Drina. It was a bold manœuvre for so small a State as Serbia to undertake at the commencement of a war with a great Power, and, as events proved, its only result was to inflict a measure of unnecessary fatigue upon the troops engaged, and hasten a renewal of Austrian activity from the west.

For the development of the strategy a sector of the Sava was chosen lying almost midway between Matchva and Beograd, where the river made a loop-like incursion into Serbia known as the Koupinski Kout. For all military purposes both banks of the Sava were here in the possession of the Serbs, for the whole of this peculiar tongue of land could be swept by artillery stationed on Serbian soil, while the island of Podgorichka Ada on the west, and that opposite Skela on the east, formed additional bases

¹ "Battalions de marche" were made up of the remains of other regiments, and recruits.

from which an invasion could be effected with ease and in comparative security.

The decision which had been taken by General Headquarters was kept secret from all save the Divisional Staffs, and it was not until they arrived near the river during the night of September 5th-6th that the field-officers were aware that an offensive against Austria had, in reality, been commenced. The marches to the centres of concentration were, moreover, undertaken during the night, for it was necessary to screen the movements of the troops from the eyes of the enemy aeroplanes which unceasingly swept up and down the river in reconnaissance. The principal crossing was to be effected at Novoselo—the extreme south of the loop—to which point were directed the Cavalry Division, a greater part of Shoumadia I Division, and one regiment of Danube I Division. A section of Shoumadia I was to go over at Podgorichka Ada, while the Danube Division, with the exception of the regiment already noted, was concentrated at Skela.

At 1 a.m. on September 6th, Shoumadia I commenced the crossing at Novoselo in barges. Having established a detachment on the Austrian shore, they brought up a pontoon train composed of the Turkish boats, and by 2 a.m. the construction of the bridge had been begun. The work was finished before daybreak, and the division thereupon passed over in force.

Simultaneously, a crossing had been effected in barges at Podgorichka Ada, the operation in this case being carried out under cover of two batteries of field-artillery, and two 12 cm. cannon posted on the south bank of the river.

The problem of the Danube Division at Skela was more complicated. As one stood on the Serbian shore, a branch of the river some 150 yards wide ran south of the island, itself 230 yards across. On the other side the waterway stretched a further 350 yards before it reached the dyke which flanked a great expanse of meadowland rolling down from the pretty little village of Koupinovo. The Skela island was in Austro-Hungarian hands, and its capture was necessarily the first object of the attack.

The Serbs placed three batteries of artillery opposite the island, and while, at 2 a.m. on September 6th, these opened a well-nourished shrapnel fire, infantry set off from the shore in boats. With the exception of five casualties in the foremost boat, the Serbs suffered no losses, for the guns quickly rendered the island untenable, and the Austrians fled to the safety of the dykes. The greater part of the Danube Division, with its artillery and horses, was then ferried across—for no regular bridge train was here available, and it was, in fact, some time before a bridge was constructed of the pontoons of water-mills. Once installed on the island, the artillery cleared the open country of Austrians (who retired to the shelter of a neighbouring wood), and the crossing to the northern mainland was operated without great difficulty.

The curious detour made by the Sava had offered the Serbs an almost ideal crossing-place, and, strangely enough, an old watercourse of the same river provided them with a natural bridgehead. Nearly opposite the Kout there was a small wood of almost circular shape surrounded by what was then a moat. At the north-west of the moat lay the town of Obrez, and the formation of the whole section suggested its having been designed by nature with a view to affording a most excellent base for offensive operations such as those under discussion.

The troops of the Shoumadia Division, thanks to the Turkish pontoons, were first across, and they at once undertook the task of clearing the wood and fortifying the bridgehead. The opposition encountered was not strong—a matter of two regiments of infantry with one battery of artillery—and a vigorous shelling of the forest speedily drove most of the defenders towards Obrez, which town they likewise evacuated, after a score of shells had been dropped into it, and then scattered to the north-west and south-east. The Cavalry Division subsequently arrived on the scene, when the two units proceeded to fortify the moat and throw a bridge over it.

The Danube Division, working towards the east and north-east, had a running fight with one regiment and two batteries all day, but succeeded in capturing the villages of Koupinovo and Progar.

While the chief offensive had gone well for Serbian arms, the supporting action operated by the Timok I Division from Mitrovitz ended in a bitter disaster. The mission before this division was to occupy and thoroughly fortify Mitrovitz, and with it a strong bridgehead, after which it was to bear on the enemy's flank and generally seek to relieve the pressure on the army acting in Symria.

During the day of September 5th Timok I had grouped at Gloushtsi to find the Austrians holding Ravnye, Pro-trevtse, Mitrovitz, and Yarak with fairly feeble forces. The crossing of the Sava on the Podgorichka Ada-Novoselo-Skela line having been planned for that night, the division split into two columns, its left (one regiment and one battery) being ordered to make an energetic movement against Mitrovitz with heavy artillery fire, whilst its right (two regiments with five batteries) was to attempt a passage of the river at Yasenova Grada, between Mitrovitz and Yarak. The remaining regiment of the division remained in reserve behind the right column, while the divisional cavalry was to take the extreme right and, by its action on the river-bank, hold in check the hostile detachment at Yarak.

The troops marched from Gloushtsi at midnight, and at 4 a.m. on September 6th, the head of the right column arrived at Chevrentya and immediately reconnoitred a suitable emplacement for a pontoon bridge. Towards 5 a.m. a spirited artillery and rifle fire was opened with a view to preparing the terrain for a crossing, it being understood that, in the event of a successful issue, the 15th regiment would deploy on the left and the 13th regiment on the right, the two forces subsequently entrenching on the line Mandyeloshka bara-Shashinski with the object of countering any movement of the enemy from Yarak.

The despatch of the troops in barges commenced at 7 a.m., and was received by a heavy volley from the Austrian shore. In the first boat five men were killed and three wounded ; the second was riddled with bullets and sank immediately. This initial check had no other effect than to spur on the Serbs to renewed effort. Orders

were given to the artillery to open fire on the enemy trenches with explosive shell, the passage by barges continued, and many of the Serbs, chafing at the slowness of the movement, threw themselves into the river and commenced to swim across, singing as they swam. At 7.40 a.m. three barge loads had reached the enemy shore, and, while awaiting reinforcements, three score of the men stormed the Austrian trenches, inflicted comparatively heavy casualties in killed and wounded, and took twenty prisoners.

Thence onward, events moved quickly. By midday the whole of the 13th regiment was across the river, and with them seven companies of the 15th regiment, with twelve maxims and three field-guns. Half an hour later the Serbian forces were engaged in combat with the Austrians at Yarak and Shashinski, and the engineers were busily throwing a pontoon bridge across the Sava.

The forward movement of the Serbian forces seems now to have been prosecuted with an unfortunate lack of foresight. Although Mitrovitz and Yarak, linked up as they were by road and rail with Austrian centres of concentration, were still in the hands of the enemy, no attempt was made to fortify a bridgehead, nor were the flanks of the advance protected, as they might easily have been, by a judicious disposition of batteries along the Serbian bank of the Sava. On the contrary, although the bridge was not yet in position, the troops were pushed on until, by 5 p.m., the 13th regiment was outside Shashinski with both its flanks exposed to hostile attack. At this juncture the eventuality which should have been foreseen actually happened. The Austrians received important reinforcements at Mitrovitz and Yarak, and delivered a simultaneous attack on both flanks of the regiment. That a considerable body of the Serbs were able to extricate themselves from so hopeless a position and get back to the river reflects the greatest credit upon the men. They reached the Sava after two hours' stubborn fighting, carrying with them a mass of wounded, to find the bridge near completion. The pontoons were already in position, and all but the last twenty yards of the 400-yard span were planked. On

the one side was a regiment with half its effectives out of action and the other half subjected to a murderous fire from an enemy in overwhelming force ; on the other, a battalion of reserves seeking to cross to the support of their comrades ; between the two a still unfinished pontoon bridge. The better to insure the arrival of the reinforcements before the wounded could rush the bridge, it was decided to send the pioneers immediately in advance of the reserves, and by this means secure for them the first passage. But, ere this intention could be put into practice, the wounded flung themselves into the empty pontoons, which, still insecurely fixed, parted the moorings and drifted with their cargo of bleeding warriors down the stream. Some, too heavily laden, speedily sank. A truly terrible scene followed. Cut off from retreat and relief alike, the gallant band stood with their backs to the watery wall, facing their foe like hunted stags, their curses mingling with the shouts of desperation from the thwarted reinforcements and with the cries of the drowning wounded, until the noise rose above the din of musketry and machine-gun fire. The Serbians were, however, game to the end. Isolated from supplies and ammunition, they fought to the last cartridge and then surrendered, while their comrades on the other bank, guns and rifles silent because no aid could be rendered for risk of hitting their own people, looked on in agonised impotence. All that was saved of the 13th regiment was the flag, rescued by the Colonel himself and handed to the regimental doctor, who swam the river with it shortly after midnight.

Fortunately, the imprudence which led the Timok Division to disaster did not characterise the operations of the main expedition. The line was advanced cautiously, preceded always by a strong advance-guard of cavalry, and upon the successful occupation of Progar, Ashanya, and Obrez, the old bridgehead round the moat was discarded and a new and more extended ring of earthworks constructed around the villages named, terminating at its western extremity at Podgorichka Ada. Thus the three Serbian bases were thoroughly pro-

ted by a semicircular field fortress radiating from Koupinovo.

Having in this manner assured his communications, General Boyovitch advanced the Cavalry Division in fan-like formation to the north and north-west, the horse-men being closely followed by the Shoumadia I Division. On the right, the Danube I took a north-easterly direction. By the evening of September 7th, mounted patrols had arrived on the line Karlovchitch-Subotischte-Grabovtsi, and had unmasked the enemy holding a front Detch-Mihalyevtsi-Brestach-Platichovo.

The following day the patrols in the north and west sector arrived at Mihalyevtsi-Subotischte-Brestach-Nikintsi, but the forward movement of the infantry was arrested at Voichin-Marich Salas-Vitoyevchi. This perhaps unnecessary discretion was in part occasioned by the knowledge that the Austrians were in force at Detch and Surchin, and it was therefore considered inadvisable to push the Shoumadia I too far ahead until this opposition had been overcome. On September 9th the Danube I Division attacked Detch and Surchin. The former village was captured after a short but determined resistance, but the Austrians succeeded in holding Surchin, the Serbian advance being checked at Bechmen. The next day, September 10th, the division renewed its offensive against two enemy regiments well entrenched at Surchin, and took the village by assault after heavy fighting. This task accomplished, they turned north and captured Dobranovtsi with little difficulty. Once this point was reached, the troops stationed around Beograd undertook their rôle of co-operation, and, having effected a passage of the river, advanced to Semlin.

All available information suggested that the Austrian troops against the Serbian left had been withdrawn to Rouma, and the Shoumadia I Division was accordingly instructed to take up a position on the line Karlovchitch-Tovarnik-Grabovtsi and to fortify itself strongly, in order that the Danube I Division and the detachment from Beograd could prosecute their advance and effect a sweeping movement in a north-westerly direction with their right wing extending to the Danube. This strategy

was designed with the object of driving all the enemy units westward on to the Frushkagora Mountain, and its success would have left the Serbs in undisputed possession of the plain. The two divisions, with the Independent Cavalry, would then have been free to advance against Frushkagora, and—this stronghold once taken—the Serbs would have been masters of the territory lying between the Danube and the Sava, a territory of which, be it noted, the inhabitants were almost exclusively of Serbian race.

September 11th was a very successful day for the invaders. Combats of more or less importance took place on the entire front, but the enemy were always outnumbered, and retired on to a line Yarak-Dobrintsi-Popintsi-Golubintsi-Pazora Stara, while the Serbs held Hrtkovtsi - Budyanovtsi - Subotishte - Mihalyevtsi - Voika-Pazora Nova. The Austrians now took up a strong position behind the Romer Canal, and when, the following morning, the right wing of the Shoumadia Division occupied Pechintsi and continued northward, they were met by a heavy fire coming from a hill behind the waterway, which effectually checked their advance. The left wing of the division, however, protected by the guns of the Timok Division stationed in the north-east corner of Matchva, attacked Yarak, and, with a free use of bombs and bayonets, took the town by assault.

At this critical moment in the history of the expedition, the Austrians commenced their Second Invasion of Serbia across the Drina in such force that the advance in Syrmia was of necessity abandoned, and the three divisions there engaged were recalled to the defence of the homeland.

The retirement of the Shoumadia Division was ordered for the night of September 12th, but during the afternoon it was subjected to a strong enemy attack on the line Sibatch-Petchintsi, its point of liaison with Danube I. A telephone message picked up by a cavalry patrol had disclosed the Austrian intention, with the result that when, at 4 p.m., the 58th Brigade (74th and 94th regiments of the 29th division of the 9th Austrian Army Corps) attacked this sector of the Serbian front (held by one infantry regiment and one battery of artillery), they

met with a vigorous resistance. The combat continued with ever-increasing intensity until 8 p.m., when the Austrians were finally driven off at the point of the bayonet with great loss. The terrain before Petchintsi was blue with the uniforms of the Austrian dead, and prisoners captured a few days later, when the two forces again met in armed conflict, reported that of one enemy regiment which had entered into the fight 4,000 strong, only 1,400 mustered at its close. The success was of considerable tactical value to the Serbs, for while their artillery continued to fire, the infantry were enabled to effect their retirement to the bridgehead, unknown to the Austrians.

To the Independent Cavalry was given the task of screening the movements of the two divisions from the Austrians. The operation, extending as it did over a very large front, was by no means easy; but, by dint of splitting up the force into a number of small detachments, the enemy was led to believe that he was opposed by troops in considerable strength. So well did this ruse succeed, that the Shoumadia I and Danube I Divisions were able to effect their withdrawal across the Sava in perfect order (despite a torrential downpour which made the going very difficult for the transport), and during the night of September 13th the Serbians were all back in their own country. Both divisions were at first ordered to the Drina, but the situation there having taken a more favourable turn for the Serbs, Shoumadia I was diverted to Shabatz, where it met and checked an Austrian force descending from Yarak.

Throughout the expedition in Syrmia the Serbs were the object of enthusiastic demonstrations on the part of the population, and their departure was the signal for a corresponding degree of depression. For these testimonies of affection the Syrmians paid dearly upon the return of the Austro-Hungarian forces. In the case of one village, the punishment which a Hungarian regiment desired to inflict so greatly aroused the indignation of a regiment of Croats that a pitched battle ensued, in which rifles, maxims, and even cannon were employed on both sides, heavy casualties resulting.

As events fell out, the expedition in Syrmia served no useful military purpose, because, before its strategy could be developed, the Austrians themselves resumed their offensive from Bosnia. The possibility of such a contingency had been foreseen, but the strength of the hostile force engaged came as a surprise to the Serbian leaders. They had not considered it probable that Austria would dare either to call north the bulk of her troops who were against Montenegro, or virtually to divest the Dalmatian and the Italian frontiers of the units stationed there, and the Bosnian towns of a large part of their garrison. Yet such was the operation that had been carried out, and General Potiorek was enabled to re-form his decimated army and to advance again in strength against Valjevo.

CHAPTER V

THE SECOND AUSTRIAN INVASION

ACCORDING to the information at the disposal of the Serbian Staff, the Austrian Balkan Army was, from August 25th to September 7th, 1914, grouped as follows :

A Combined Corps : Klenak-Yarak-Bosout.

The 8th Corps : Bosout-Biyelyina.

The 13th Corps : Yanya-Koslouk.

The 15th Corps : Koslouk-Zvornik.

The 16th Corps : (less 3-4 battalions), Zvornik-Lyoubovya.

The 3-4 battalions of the 16th Corps, together with 6-10 battalions of Landsturm and recruits, were before the Montenegrins, and one and a half divisions held the front Semlin-Weisskirchen.

Vienna had described the first invasion, which ended in bitter disaster upon the Yadar River, as a " Punitive Expedition " ; but the unexpected valour of the Serbians had nevertheless impressed the Austrian Staff with the necessity of taking King Peter's army more seriously. Probably with the idea of ridding themselves once for all of the menace on the southern borders, they now brought up heavy reserves and reinforcements, and, taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the Serbian expedition into Sirmia, attacked over the whole of the Drina frontier, from Lyoubovya to Ratcha.

For the purposes of explanation, it will be advisable to divide the theatre of operations covered by the Second Invasion into two sectors, of which the town of Loznitza may be considered the dividing line. The northern sector was defended by the Combined, Morava I, Timok II, and Timok I Divisions—the latter in reserve in Matchva

and sadly reduced in strength as a result of the catastrophe near Mitrovitza.

During the night of September 7th-8th, the artillery of the Austrian 8th Corps opened a well-nourished fire over the front Bosout-Amajlya, which was held by the Serbian Morava I Division, itself divided, for facility of organisation, into a northern sector (Bosout-Limanska Ada), and a southern sector (Limanska Ada-Begovtsi, afterwards extending to Novo Selo). The defence of each sector was confided to one regiment with two batteries of field-artillery, two regiments with two batteries of field-artillery being held in reserve near Klenye, and one battery of howitzers at Barnovopolje. The determined nature of the onslaught speedily led to the despatch of two reserve battalions to the firing-line of each sector, and, thus strengthened, the offensive was temporarily arrested. Towards 3 o'clock on the morning of September 8th, the Austrians renewed their attack, and, under cover of an intense bombardment, succeeded in throwing a pontoon bridge across the river at Limanska Ada. By 4.30 a.m. they had been again repulsed. A further successful enemy attack led to the despatch of six battalions and two batteries of Timok II, four battalions and one battery of Timok I, together with the 8th howitzer battery, to the scene of action, and these reinforcements, coming up in time, succeeded in hurling the invaders back once more on to their own shore.

But the Austrians were not to be denied. Having failed in the centre, they essayed in the north, and secured a foothold at Parashnitza, where the invaluable assistance of their river monitors gave them possession of a small tongue of land much resembling the loop at Koupinski Kout.

Throughout September 8th and 9th fighting of a very determined nature spread along the banks of the Drina. The engagements, individually insignificant themselves, made up a miniature battle in the aggregate, and although the Serbs were acting on the defensive, they suffered casualties to the extent of 5 officers and 209 men killed, and 18 officers and 1,490 men wounded.

Skirmishes of a more or less sanguinary character marked the two succeeding days, when the Combined Division,

which held the front south of Morava I, received orders to proceed to the assistance of the 3rd Army (south of Loznitz), the Morava line being thereupon extended seven miles southward. September 14th registered an incident at Samourocha, where the Austrians were allowed to cross and come on in fair force, when half of them were wiped out and the balance taken prisoners.

With the retirement of the 1st Army from Syrmia, the enemy there had been left free to undertake an offensive, and, seizing the opportunity, he flung a bridge over the river from Yarak, and commenced a descent from the north-eastern corner of Matchva. It was on account of this movement that Shoumadia I Division was arrested in its march towards the Drina. Turning north from Shabatz, Colonel Terzitch led his troops against the Austrians at Tabanovitch, and, defeating them, pushed them back to Prichinovitch, where they dug themselves in under the protection of their heavy guns at Drenovatz. For the rest, it may be said that the attack in what we have described as the northern sector failed in its object, for the Austrians, driven back on the Drina and in Matchva, only succeeded in retaining possession of Parashnitza and a narrow strip of swamp in the north. Both armies proceeded to fortify themselves on their respective lines.

The effect of the Syrmia expedition speedily became apparent in the sector south of Loznitz. If the necessity for an offensive into Austrian territory be provisionally admitted, every argument supported Poutnik's decision to draw the necessary troops from the mountainous south rather than from the lowlands of the north; but by doing so he weakened his frontier at a vulnerable point, particularly in view of the fact—not then apparent—that the Austrians had abundant reserves at their disposal with which to reinforce their mountain corps. The theory of the Serbian Staff—and it was a theory imposed by the circumstances, and quite logical in the light of the information then to hand—was that the Austrians would not be favourably disposed toward an attack over the rugged terrain covered by the Gouchevo-

Boranya-Yagodnya ranges, and they were accordingly content to leave the defence of that sector to the three divisions (Drina I and II, and Morava II) comprising the 3rd Army.

As a matter of fact, the Austrian attack developed in greater strength in the south than in the north, and the two Drina divisions found themselves called upon to resist an offensive undertaken by the bulk of the two superbly equipped Austrian mountain corps. During the night of September 8th to 9th a hostile invasion was operated in force at Brasinski Han. A merely formal resistance was offered by the Drina I Division, which, retiring south in two columns, the left towards Eminovoda (Gouchevo) and the right by Smrdan, observed that the enemy had effected a further entry by two bridges thrown over the Drina south of Zvornik. The right column thereupon retired to Tsrni-vrh and the left to Eminovoda.

The Serbians now realised the mistake they had made in attempting to hold the territory lying west of the Gouchevo-Boranya-Yagodnya ranges. The 3rd Army by this time counted only 580 officers and 34,500 men, with 59 cannon and 23 maxims. Had this force been fortified on the mountains, it might have succeeded in checking the enemy onslaught; but, distributed along the river-bank, its various units could do no more than offer a show of opposition and then trek for safety. In the effort to seize the first available heights they were checkmated by the better-equipped Austrians. Gouchevo was occupied by infantry, but an attempt to prepare roads for the conveyance of artillery thence was broken by the fire from hostile siege-guns posted on the western bank of the Drina. Simultaneously, a single battery of Serbian field-artillery which had been hauled upon the summit of Marmoutovatz (440) was overpowered by enemy howitzers in position on neighbouring heights. Once apprised of the importance of the invasion, Headquarters decided to hold the Yadar road, and to this end ordered the Combined Division to proceed south from Lyeshnitza via Tekerish, and temporarily strengthened the Drina I Division by attaching to it two regiments and two batteries from Drina II. The 3rd Army was then instructed to

withdraw and await the Austrian attack on the line Tsrni-vrh (890)-Matchko Kamen-Roudine-Brankovatz-Rozani-Proslop. A massed attack by the Austrians subsequently forced the Morava II Division back on to the positions of Primit-Vrnimi-Miloutinov grob ; but at this point the enemy advance was checked, and two regiments and the artillery of the Danube II Division coming up in reserve, they were ordered to fortify Mramor as a second line.

Meantime, the Combined Division had left the Drina at 9 p.m. on September 11th, *en route* for the southern theatre. Proceeding via Prnyavor-Tekerish, they executed a notable forced march, for, despite the difficulty of moving cannon and impedimenta over mountainous roads which were a quagmire, they succeeded in reaching Zavlaka by the following evening, having covered a distance of no less than forty-three miles in the twenty-four hours. At this point news was received that the Austrians had effected a crossing in force at Kouria-chista, where they had fortified a bridgehead. This disconcerting development occasioned a change in the Serbian plans, and while the enemy threat against Kroupagn necessitated the despatch of a regiment in that direction, the rest of the Combined Division was ordered to proceed to Krst,¹ where it arrived at 9 p.m. on September 13th. Finding that the situation at Gouchevo was critical, the Commander sent a battalion on to Tsrni vrh, but it was immediately attacked by superior hostile forces and driven from the summit.

As the subsequent struggle for possession of Gouchevo is of tactical interest and had an important bearing upon the general development of the action, it therefore merits detailed consideration. On September 14th the Combined Division, which, it will be remembered, now consisted of only three regiments, deployed for the attack. Two regiments formed the first line, the third being held in reserve. Both units attained their initial objective. The Austrians had been unable to get their cannon on to Koulishte, and, despite the difficulty of the ascent over exposed terrain, the Serbian 2nd regiment scaled the foothills and succeeded in dislodging the enemy infantry on

* About four miles east of Loznitza.

the height. The 1st regiment reached Veliki Bobina. General Rashitch, commanding the division, had early appreciated the decisive importance of the Gouchevo range, and realised that if the Austrians were able to bring up their cannon they would obtain control of the surrounding country. For this reason he had made the capture of one of the predominant positions his first consideration, and the successful assault of the 2nd regiment and its establishment upon Koulishte was, therefore, a matter for great satisfaction.

Then followed one of those unfortunate errors of judgment which not infrequently change the whole course of a campaign, and which, in the case under discussion, enormously increased the difficulties of the Serbs and led to a subsequent sacrifice of thousands of lives. The Commander of the 2nd regiment, ignorant of the general situation, and fearing that his force would be enveloped during the night, retired from the summit of Koulishte to Veliki Bobina, and thus permitted the Austrians to reoccupy, without combat, a vantage point from which they were subsequently dislodged at heavy cost. The situation before the division was thereby radically changed, and the entire unit was obliged to withdraw to the shelter of the Shtira River.

On September 15th the Combined Division was reinforced by five battalions—thus making good the regiment detached to Kroupagn and adding an extra battalion. A section of the right bank of the Shtira River had already been entrenched, when scouts reported the presence of an enemy column marching in a south-easterly direction. As subsequent developments showed, this was but the central of three columns, whose object was to separate the two Serbian armies (2nd and 3rd) and march on Yarebitse. At the time (2.30 p.m.) the Serbs were aware of the presence of one column only, and General Rashitch, confessing to an indefinable feeling that something important was afoot, the object of which he could not grasp, took the obvious course for a commander in doubt, and decided to attack.

The 6th regiment (then in reserve at Krst) was ordered to march towards Plech, and, upon making contact with

the Austrians, to fall on the head of the column in strength and subsequently deal a brisk blow on its right flank, with the object of turning it towards Ribarsko brdo.

The 5th and 1st Supernumerary Regiments, holding positions on the right bank of the Shtira and forming respectively the right and left wings of the division, each gave a battalion to reinforce the 6th regiment. The 2nd Sy. Regiment, which had been originally ordered to keep the centre, had not come up, and was therefore held in reserve, thus leaving the course open for the advance of the 6th Regiment, which may be referred to as the striking force of the division.

In the meantime the Austrian column, continuing its progress, had thrown its vanguard across the Shtira, where, having unmasked the approaching Serbs, it entered into action, to find itself attacked in force by the whole of the 6th regiment. This onslaught, as unexpected as it was sudden—for the invaders had every reason to believe that the Serbs had retired with a view to purely defensive action—threw the Austrians back across the river, where they were followed by the Serbian column, always endeavouring to deploy on the enemy right, as directed by its Commander.

The next day (September 16th) the regiment was ordered to continue its offensive and drive the Austrians towards Ribarsko brdo, and, still unaware of the presence of any enemy columns other than that with which he was in contact, General Rashitch ordered his right (5th Sy. Regiment of three battalions and one battery) to advance in the direction of Trschitsko brdo via Glavitza, and his left (1st Sy. regiment of three battalions) to work towards Koulishte from Veliki Bobina. The centre (6th Sy. Regiment of six battalions) was instructed to change its course from Ribarsko brdo-Glavitza to the direction Eminovoda, where, in principle, it was to co-operate with the right wing. The 2nd Regiment, in reserve, remained on the right bank of the Shtira, and the bulk of the divisional artillery continued to occupy its prepared positions on the left of that river, whence it supported the attack.

The execution of the above-mentioned dispositions com-

menced on the morning of September 17th. With their adversary retiring slowly before them, the three Serbian columns advanced until suddenly brought up by the discovery that they were confronted, not by one but by three enemy columns, which investigation showed to be composed of six regiments. The Austrian movements demonstrated, however, that they had likewise been caught napping, and they doubtless concluded that the Serbian advance in three columns signified the presence of a considerably larger force than actually existed. At this psychological moment, when the fate of both sides was, so to speak, in the balance, the united Serbian batteries opened a vigorous fire on the central Austrian column, which fell back on its left, and threw both into confusion. In this state they were subjected to a well-nourished enfilade fire and suffered heavy losses.

The Serbian right column, arriving at Glavitza, found itself in contact with that part of the enemy's left which had preserved its formations, and a determined combat at once developed. The Serbs were heavily outnumbered, but first one, then another, and finally a third battalion was sent to their aid by the 6th Sy. Regiment (centre), when the sanguinary struggle terminated in their favour. On the other hand, the 6th Regiment, itself now reduced to three battalions, was necessarily unable to continue its progress towards Eminovoda, and both the centre and left Austrian columns were thus able to retire towards the Drina, leaving behind them a rich spoil of war. Not all, however, had time to seek their bridges, and many of the troops commenced to swim the river, large numbers perishing in the attempt.

The question of the Serbian failure to pursue again arises, but in this instance the explanation is more immediately evident than on previous occasions. The Serbian right column, only three battalions strong, and feeble in cadres, had suffered severe casualties, and, owing to constant marching and fighting since the departure from Lyeshnitz, the men were physically worn out. The three battalions which had been received in reinforcement might, of course, have continued the pursuit; but here the overwhelming importance of the Gouchevo

position again becomes evident. With no point of this predominating range in their possession, the tactical situation of the pursuing Serbians would have been difficult in the extreme, and the central column was, therefore, ordered to continue its advance against Eminovoda. On this position it encountered very serious opposition from the enemy, and, the task of storming the summit proving beyond the powers of the three battalions of which it was then composed, the withdrawal of its other half from the right column was rendered imperative. Once restored to its original strength, the column attacked the hillsides, and, progressing steadily with a free use of bombs and bayonets, succeeded in driving the Austrians from Eminovoda.

The action of the Serbian left column may be briefly dismissed. Having undertaken its appointed march towards Koulishte, it encountered the right enemy column on the position of Poushcarevatz at 2 p.m. on September 14th. The existence of an Austrian force at this point was as great a surprise for the Serbs as had been the discovery of the other hostile column at Glavitza, for the Divisional Staff had accompanied the other columns, and they first learned of the new diversion from the sudden roar of cannon and the commencement of a violent combat in their rear. Fighting of a most determined character at once set in, but the Serbs forged steadily ahead and drove their foes on to the foot-hills of Koulishte, where a part of the Austrian forces commenced the ascent, pursued by the fire of the Serbian artillery. The other part retreated in the direction of Eminovoda, where they ran into the Serbian central column and were badly cut up. Eventually, Koulishte, like Eminovoda, was successfully occupied.

In this manner the ridges of Gouchevo came to be divided between the two armies. The Austrians held Tsrni vrh (735) and Point 708, with the Serbs in possession of Eminovoda and Koulishte. Thereafter the rivals sapped up closer and closer to one another, and the long, sanguinary, and indecisive struggle for complete supremacy commenced.

The importance of the action of the Combined Division

in at once checking the renewed Austrian endeavour to penetrate down the Yadar Valley and in redressing the strategical and tactical mistakes which had led to the loss of Gouchevo, can hardly be over-estimated. The conduct of the men, too, in successfully routing an adversary in greatly superior strength is worthy of the highest commendation, and the 6th Sy. Regiment, in particular, carved for itself an honoured place in Serbian history. An Austrian success in this theatre at a time when the divisions in the south were so hardly pressed and those in the north were too far removed or too busily occupied to render assistance, might have produced an incalculable effect upon the course of the war in the south-eastern theatre and a correspondingly important repercussion on the battle-fields of Europe.

In the meantime, the fight had been raging with ever-increasing intensity farther south, where, while pressing their invasion all along the line, the Austrians devoted their attention to another summit of decisive importance, that of Kostainik—at the northern end of the Boranya range.

Had this been lost, the enemy would have succeeded in dividing the 3rd Serbian Army. It would, further, have rendered it possible for them to fall on the communications of the 3rd Army—at that time Valyevo-Zavlaka—and force the Serbs to bring their supplies round by Tekerish. Kostainik was, therefore, subjected to a series of severe attacks which continued by day and night until September 11th. At various times the Austrian 8th, 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th Brigades were employed; but, though heavy losses were suffered on both sides, the position was successfully held by the Drina I Division.

Near Kroupagn and to the south, the Morava II Division was reinforced by the Danube II. This force, together with the "Detachment of Lyoubovya" (two battalions of the 3rd Ban with ten de Bange guns), was steadily driven back by vastly superior enemy forces, so that by September 15th the Austrians were in possession of all the

terrain west and south of the line Shanatz-Sokolska Planina-Petska. With the arrival of the Danube I Division from Syrmia on September 16th, the Serbian units in this theatre were grouped under the command of the 1st Army and ordered to undertake an immediate attack upon the invaders. It may be noted in passing that this force comprised more than its usual effectives, for Danube II had received a regiment from the Combined Division, and Danube I was now five instead of four regiments strong.

The operation was primarily directed against the Sokolska Planina, all the summits of which (Ravno-brdo, Kouline (706), Yasenovatz, Melatina, Yasharev breg, Petkovo brdo and Goritza) were in hostile hands. The deployment for the attack was as follows :

Morava II	.	.	Against Ravno brdo and Height 706.
Danube II	.	.	Against Kouline and Yasenovatz.
Danube I	.	.	Against Goritza, Yasharev breg, and Petkovo brdo.

The mountainous and thickly wooded nature of the terrain rendered military action exceedingly difficult, and progress was at first very slow. Little by little, however, the Serbian advanced parties, adopting much the same tactics all along the line, crept steadily up in open formation under a heavy rifle and artillery fire until they were at close range, and then, throwing up temporary cover, awaited the arrival of the main forces. Once these came up, the order to charge was given and a rush made at the positions. The effect upon the Austrians was startling though not entirely unexpected, for they had previously advanced upon a stubborn but retreating enemy. On this occasion, while many turned tail and fled, despite the fact that their own artillery was directed against them, the rest stood fast. Fierce hand-to-hand fighting ensued, but the Serbs were not to be denied, and they succeeded in securing possession of all the heights. They found the Austrian trenches choked with dead and wounded, the survivors having taken flight in the direction of the Drina.

The order was then given to complete the conquest of

the range by the capture of Melatina. For this it was found necessary to bring up artillery—under the existing conditions an almost superhuman task, which was satisfactorily accomplished only by dint of dragging the guns up and down the hill-sides with the aid of the infantry—and during the night a road was cleared through the forest and a battery placed in a concealed position at a distance of only 600 yards from the enemy. When day dawned, the Austrians were seen to be working on their trenches; but the sudden hail of shrapnel which fell upon them threw them into utter confusion. No disposition to await the general attack was shown now, and the Swaba took to their heels and fled, pursued by a sustained rifle, machine-gun, and artillery fire which caused great execution among them. They left behind three mountain-guns and three machine-guns, together with a mass of other impedimenta.

So complete was the defeat, that the Serbs were able to arrive on the line Shanatz-Melenkov Kamen-Bran-kovatz-Obednik-Velesh-Karachitza-Tchermanovitza gai-Brdyanska Glavitza, with cavalry patrols extending to the Drina at Lyoubovya.

The attention of both armies was now centred around the commanding position of Matchko Kamen (literally, "The Cat's Leg"), a position which, by reason of the terrific struggle which ensued for its possession—it was taken and retaken no fewer than eight times—and the appalling losses occasioned, will bulk large in Serbian military history. The sole aim of Marshal Poutnik's strategy was now to drive the invaders out of Serbian territory. With the forces at his disposal he was unable to work for any startling *coup*, and he accordingly planned a wide sweeping movement destined to no other object than to push the Austrians northward into the hills and thus render their military position precarious and force them over the border. The general's idea was, therefore, to storm Matchko Kamen and subsequently advance the 1st Army until it occupied a line of crests Kriva Yela, Tsrni vrh (890)-Debelo Osoye-Ouzivalishte-Tchartchitchi-Polyana-Osmanovo brdo. The manœuvre, as will be observed on reference to the map on page 89,

would have completed the chain of heights which commence with Gouchevo in the north, and would have given the Serbs a frontier which they could have held with a minimum expenditure of men and ammunition.

The attack on Matchko Kamen, which developed on September 19th, was executed with considerable energy by detachments of the 1st Army. The infantry succeeded in taking the approach to Perounika, but then advised Headquarters that no further progress could be made without the aid of artillery. Despite almost insurmountable difficulties, one battery was got into position, and, under cover of its fire, the troops went ahead. The Austrians, however, soon obtained the range of the Serbian guns and rained shell upon them with such effect that within a couple of hours they had killed or wounded all the officers and gunners. The infantry had now advanced to within 600 yards of the Austrian trenches, and their position, exposed to an unchallenged fire from the enemy cannon, was critical indeed. They crudely dug themselves in and remained in what was nothing less than an inferno until a new crew arrived to man their artillery. Simultaneously with the arrival of the gunners another Serbian battery commenced to shell the Austrians from Naishina brdo, and, aided by this cross-fire, the Serbs fixed bayonets and successfully occupied the celebrated summit at 6.30 p.m. But the Habsburgers did not retire to any great distance. They had already thrown up earthworks on a promontory some 250 yards distant, and from this vantage point they continued to contest the ground throughout the succeeding night.

The next morning the Serbs brought up another battery, and a pitched battle ensued between the two forces at close quarters. So desperate was the fight that very soon half the gunners were out of action. The rest, however, continued to serve the cannon, and after two hours of combat the Austrian right was seen to be wavering. The artillery was then directed against the enemy left, and an hour later the order was given to the infantry to proceed to the attack. Towards 5.30 p.m. the height was taken at the assault, and the Serbs, having driven back their foe some 400 yards, remained

on their positions for the night, heavy losses having rendered a further pursuit into the densely wooded country impossible.

The stubborn defence of the Austrians had, in reality, been due to the fact that they had succeeded in massing a very imposing force around Matchko Kamen. They had strongly entrenched all the surrounding positions, particularly that at Koshoudnya Stopa, and when the Commandant of this section of the home army inspected his position the following morning he found his enemy advancing in three strong columns. With the first shots from their own guns, the Serbs were subjected to a murderous cross-fire from Austrian artillery posted on Koshoudnya Stopa, Ouzivalishte, and Lipnik, while heavy howitzers entered into action from the security of their own side of the Drina. In this manner Matchko Kamen was rendered untenable, but the Serb infantry nevertheless succeeded in remaining within 300 yards of the hostile trenches. There they were counter-attacked in force and driven off the height. The retreat was disordered, and the situation seemed irretrievably lost, when the Colonel of the regiment seized the standard, miraculously rallied his men, and retook the position.

Again the Austrians advanced and secured the supremacy. Regiment after regiment of Serbs joined in the combat, always followed by a similar or superior force of Austrians, and the advantage swayed from side to side, dead and wounded falling by hundreds, until the field resembled a checkerboard of blue and olive. Of the five Serbian regimental commanders who took part, three were killed and one severely wounded. Battalion leaders fell in like proportion: of the 53 officers of the 18th Regiment, fewer than 20 remained. The fight ultimately ended in a local triumph for the Austrians; but the victors were so worn out by the struggle, that they were unable to follow up their success and could do no more than consolidate the position.

Simultaneously, the enemy had delivered an energetic and overpowering attack over the rest of the line. The left wing had suffered heavily at Yavornik and Obednik, and a section of the 9th regiment, in attempting an

advance from Matchko Kamen to Koshoudnya Stopa, had been so cut up as to involve the entire right wing in a retirement. The commander of the 1st Army was, in fact, so impressed with the severe grueling he had received that he advised General Headquarters of his intention to withdraw again to the heights of the Sokolska planina, where he proposed to occupy the positions Kouline-Melatina-Bobyia, leaving what was then a rearguard (two regiments and two batteries of artillery) on Naishina brdo-Shanatz. During the battle, however, the divisional commanders, convinced of the impossibility of taking Koshoudnya Stopa from the south, had recommended a tactical rearrangement of the forces which entailed the withdrawal of the Danube II Division to the positions of Miokovatz-Mishkovatz, to the north of Kroupagn, whence it was intended that the troops would descend on Koshoudnya Stopa from the north-east. The general displacement, effected while the combat was still raging, possibly contributed to the Serbian repulse, and Danube II had no time to execute the manœuvre indicated for it. The division had, however, been able to advance to the line Grobnitse (490)-Kik, and Marshal Poutnik ordered the remainder of the army to stay its retreat on the front Milenkov Kamen-Brankovatz-Rouyavatcha Roudinc-Obednik.

Subsequent events provided ample justification for the more optimistic view taken by the General Staff. The Austrians were thoroughly exhausted by their attack, and showed no inclination to renew it in force over this difficult terrain. They were, moreover, doubtless concerned by the progress made by the Serbian Ouzhitse army, which had penetrated a considerable distance into Bosnia. The Serbs, for their part, were equally content to settle down, and, with but slight alterations, due to intermittent skirmishes, the two armies maintained their respective lines until the Third Invasion. What fighting developed was in the nature of siege operations, and, as we shall subsequently learn, the Austrians judged the flat land of Matchva more appropriate for this kind of warfare than the savage grandeur of the country south of the Yadar River.

If the fighting under review in this chapter lacked the incident and display which distinguished the First and Third Invasions, it was in many respects the most desperate and sanguinary of the whole campaign. The losses incurred by both sides were, in comparison with the forces engaged, truly enormous, and a conservative estimate of the Serbian casualties in killed, wounded, and prisoners, put them at over 30,000 officers and men *hors de combat*.

THE BASE HOSPITAL

Throughout these operations the little town of Valyevo had been at once the headquarters, the railhead, and the base hospital and clearing-house of the Serbian army. It was situated at the terminus of a narrow-gauge railway which joined the Beograd-Salonika line at Mladenovatz, and along this single track of iron road the entire transport of the army was effected. Westward came trains packed with food, fodder, munitions, and troops; eastward went long convoys crowded with maimed humanity evacuated from the battle-field. At Mladenovatz all this conglomerate mass of commissariat had, of necessity, to be transferred from or to the broad-gauge line, and in this situation lay not the least of the problems which beset the Serbians in their struggle with the Austrian invaders.

Valyevo itself was a picturesque little town which in peace times was famous as the centre of the Serbian prune trade. Its cobbled streets were, in the main, spacious and well planned, and remunerative speculation in prunes had permitted many of the inhabitants to erect homes which, if not architecturally imposing, were, nevertheless, well built, snug, and comfortable. There still remained a few relics of the Turkish occupation—overhanging eaves, trellised windows, and the like—but these one had to seek in the byways. Under normal conditions, Valyevo was one of the most attractive of Balkan townships.

Nor had the tableau lost anything in the framing, for it was encircled by a moulding of verdant hills which

ran off into a sweep of seemingly endless woods. Viewed from the windows of the Hotel Secoulitch, the vista was almost aggravatingly English. Beyond the red-tiled roofs of intervening cottages rose the hill-side—a checkerboard of grassy slopes and patches of woodland, intersected by a brown road which ran upwards until the summit, surmounted by a whitewashed shrine amid a cluster of walnut-trees, touched the grey sky.

But Valyevo was not then to be seen under normal conditions, and with the similarity of its natural environment, the comparison with rural England ended and the contrast began. For, in the street below, there was the sound of clatter and creak, as the rude oxen wagons bumped over the cobblestones. Morning, noon, and night, they rumbled along unceasingly, and whenever one looked down one saw martial figures clad in tattered, muddy, blood-stained uniforms, with rudely bandaged body or head or foot ; and one's eyes rested on the wan, drawn faces of tortured peasants, who winced and groaned with anguish as every jolt of the springless *araba* sent a new shaft of pain through the burning wounds. For nearly fifty miles, for three days or more, they had jogged wearily along from the war theatre.

The town itself had been transformed into one huge camp of wounded. All adaptable buildings—halls, cafés, schoolrooms—had been rapidly commandeered for hospitals. Sometimes there were beds, more often, rudely made straw mattresses ; for little Serbia, worn out by two hard wars, was ill equipped to resist the onslaught of a great Power. For sixteen days the fierce battle had been raging near the frontier, and wounded had been pouring in much more rapidly than accommodation could be found for them, much more quickly than even the lighter cases could be evacuated by the little railway to Mladenovatz.

And in the streets, what misery ! There were the lamed, the halt, the maimed—men with damaged leg or foot hopping along painfully with the aid of a friendly stick ; men nursing broken arms and shattered hands ; men with bandaged heads ; men being carried from operating shops to café floors, men with body wounds

lying on stretchers—all in ragged, blood-bespattered remnants of what once were uniforms. There was little of the glory of war to be seen in Valyevo.

The Serbian medical staff, deprived, as yet, of outside assistance and short alike of doctors, nurses, and material, strove heroically to cope with their task. Where they were able to equip hospitals, the work had been very creditably done. One building was almost exclusively devoted to cases where amputations were necessary. It was clean and orderly, and the patients were obviously well cared for. But it was on leaving the organised hospitals and wending one's way through the crowds of wounded who blocked the very pavements, to the lower-class cafés, that the appalling tragedy of it all filled even the spectator with a sense of hopelessness. There, like cattle upon their beds of straw, lay sufferers from all manner of hurts. They remained mute and uncomplaining, just as they had been dropped down from the incoming oxen transports. Their wounds—three, four, or five days old—had as yet received no attention save the primitive first aid of the battle-field. Blood poisoning was setting in; limbs that prompt dressing would have saved were fast becoming ripe for the operating-table. Most of the men knew the risk they ran, for this was their third war—often too, their third wound—in two short years. Yet the doctors came not, could not come, because every man of them was already doing more than human energy allowed.

War in its worst tragedy was summed up in the lot of these poor wretches: a rough bandage on the battle-field, then days of jolting in a springless oxen wagon, until they were thrown upon a handful of straw on the floor of a dirty café which reeked with the stench of decayed garlic—and there left to rot.

CHAPTER VI

SIEGE WARFARE

FOLLOWING the Second Austrian Invasion, there set in a state of siege warfare, closely resembling, in its principal aspects, the conditions in Western Europe during the intervals between the great battles, when days of uneventful routine were sharply punctuated by desperate conflict. Both sides dug themselves in on positions which, by dint of persistent labour, they rendered increasingly impregnable. They constructed, moreover, line upon line of reserve trenches, from which a maze of communications led up to the actual front.

As a result of the Second Invasion, the Austrians had retained possession only of two small triangular strips of Serbian territory. In the north of Matchva they held the tract of marshy plain, Tolich-Ravnje-Yarak, while farther south, their conquest was limited to a section of sparsely populated mountain-land roughly encompassed within a line Smrdan-Taminovitch-Zvornik. On the credit side the Serbs could point to the fact that their Ouzhitse army had secured a footing in Hertzegovina as far as Vishegrad. Honours were, therefore, about even.

During the closing stages of their counter-offensive in September, the operations of the Serbian artillery were in many cases considerably restricted by a pronounced scarcity of gun-ammunition. While the stores were not yet depleted, it had nevertheless become necessary to observe a rigid economy in expenditure. This deficiency, to which it will be necessary to refer at greater length later on, was an ever-present factor during the *entr'acte* between the Second and Third Invasions, and therefore necessitates passing mention at this stage.

In the southern, or what might with greater precision be called the Kroupagn, theatre both armies held naturally strong positions on the Yagodnya-Boranya-Gouchevo Mountains, and an advance could only have been attempted by either side with considerable difficulty and loss of life. In the centre, on Gouchevo, by now universally recognised as a position of vital importance, Serbs and Austrians divided the crests between them, and the fight for complete supremacy continued up till the Serbian withdrawal. A little farther north the enemy temporarily held their bridgehead at Kouriachista, but were finally driven back across the river as the result of a brilliant little action on October 14th, when an officer and 600 Austrians were taken prisoners.

In the northern, or Matchva theatre, the two armies faced one another along one continuous line. The objections to the defence of Matchva were no less evident now than they had been prior to the expedition in Syrmia ; in fact, the shortage of ammunition provided an added argument against the spreading of troops around a frontier where, in addition to the Austrian field-artillery, they were often exposed to the unwelcome attentions of the river monitors. The obvious disadvantages of the open positions on the rivers, as compared with the comparative security of the strategic frontier formed by the foothills of the Tser Mountains and the watershed of the Dobrava River, were fully recognised by the Serbian Staff ; but, the Matchva plain being one of the richest districts of the country, it was deemed necessary to hold it as long as possible.

Although constant and often sanguinary fighting continued for a month after the breakdown of the Second Austrian Invasion, the general situation in the north-west underwent no appreciable change. On the Serbian side the town of Shabatz and a few miles along the riverside to the north were defended by a special detachment under a separate command. At a point where the line left the river south of Tabanovich, the trenches held by the Shoumadia I Division (headquarters at Shtitar) commenced. Then, running in a north-westerly direction, followed Timok I with headquarters at Metkovitch,

while Morava I, with headquarters at Klenye, held the Drina frontier from Ravnye to Novoselo. These three divisions, together with Timok II at Chokeshina, were incorporated in the 2nd Army, under the command of Voivode Stepanovitch, at Lipolist.

On their part, the Austrians lined the left bank of the Sava from Shabatz to Tolich, whence to Ravnye they were entrenched on Serbian soil at distances varying from 100 to 300 yards from the defenders. Thence, southward, they were confined to the left bank of the Drina, except at Parashnitza, where their earthworks formed a barrier across the base of the loop. A reference to the map on page 89 will demonstrate that considerable use could be made of the enemy monitors in the Shabatz reach of the Sava and on the sector Ravnye-Tsernabara. In addition, it may be mentioned that siege-guns stationed at Klenak and Drenovatz lent very effective aid to the Austrian operations against the sector Prichinovitch-Shabatz.

The task before the Serbian defenders in this region was one of no little difficulty. They were outnumbered in infantry and outweighed in artillery, and they were, moreover, fighting over a terrain devoid of any positions suitable for defence. At no place on the northern front could a vantage point be obtained, for the terrain was perfectly flat and broken up only by numerous stretches of woodland and fields of maize. The Serbs made the best of their unfavourable environment. They dug themselves in thoroughly opposite their foe, cleared the country behind them up to their reserve trenches, dotted the land with gun redoubts and staked it with barbed-wire entanglements, mined the ground before their most vulnerable stations, and generally prepared a fitting reception for any attacking party which might break through their outer ring and seek to penetrate.

During this period the Serbians showed themselves possessed of considerable ingenuity in the construction of their defences and encampments. Although the development of the "dug-out" as a means of protection from shell-fire was then in its infancy and the experience obtained in France for some reason was not communi-

cated to Serbia, most of the batteries constructed underground places of refuge which were secure against anything save projectiles of heavy calibre. The trenches of the infantry were deeply dug with earth embankments, fitted with loopholes, and roofed over by a framework of branches covered with sods sufficiently thick to stop shrapnel. Sapping and tunnelling were indulged in freely, particularly in the Yadar River sector, and on the Gouchevo Mountain the maze of communication trenches and fortified mine craters presented a spectacle which was to prove typical of the battle-fields of Western Europe at a later date.

Behind the lines, as elsewhere, necessity had been the mother of invention, and the dearth of tents had provoked the men to the construction of what were, in point of fact, a series of temporary villages. These were to be found spread all over the war area. Sometimes a divisional headquarters, again a hospital or stables or a convoy caravanserai, little towns of huts built of branches intersected with twigs sprang up, essentially practical, surprisingly comfortable, and ingeniously screened from aeroplanes by sods or fern-leaves or mealie stalks, as the prevailing colour of the surrounding country indicated.

The monotony of siege warfare was broken by two incidents connected with enemy operations on and beyond the river Sava, which are worthy of special mention.

The Austrians possessed an enormous superiority in heavy guns, both in number and calibre, and while Matchva suffered considerably from this cause in the west, the city of Beograd was being slowly reduced to ruins by the hostile batteries stationed on the ridge of Bizania, lying just behind Semlin. An unusually vigorous bombardment of the capital convinced the Serbians of the necessity of demonstrating the strength of the forces at their disposal by a decisive counter-attack having for its object the silencing of the Bizania batteries. This operation was carried out under the direction of General Michael Jivkovitch, commanding the defences of Beograd.

The night of September 27th-28th was selected for

the attack. Its difficulties were not underrated. Between the Sava and the positions of Bizania there lay four successive lines of Austrian trenches, the approaches to which were intersected by rivulets often man-deep, which constituted a formidable natural obstacle on this pitch-black, rainy night. The Serbs crawled over the wrecked railway bridge in strength of about three battalions and split into two columns, the one steering straight for the forts, and the other directed against the Austrian trenches on the flank. Orders had gone out that no shots were to be fired; bombs and bayonets were to do the work, and thus, moving in close formation and maintaining absolute silence, the men went forward in the darkness. An advanced patrol accounted for the enemy sentries and reported the unsuspecting occupants of the first trench to be asleep.

Thereupon the bomb-throwers crept up to within thirty yards' distance and hurled their death-dealing explosives into the earthwork, the affrighted survivors of which surrendered immediately and were sent to the rear.

The detonation of the bombs had, however, called to arms the Austrians who manned the second trench, and the Serbs were checked by a nourished fusillade until reinforcements came up. Then, having despatched a company with a machine-gun to threaten the retreat towards the forts, they rushed up and captured the remaining trenches at the point of the bayonet. For the most part, the defenders fled in panic—some took the direction of Bizania village, while others did not cease running until they reached Surchin. A great number of dead and wounded were left on the field.

All but forty of the Serbs set off in chase of the fugitives, and to this little band of retainers the Commandant explained that if they could succeed in seizing the heights of Bizania, they would be masters of Semlin. The measure of their enthusiasm was the justification for the attempt, and, opening out over the widest possible front in order to give the impression of more imposing numbers, the men dashed ahead. Thus deceived, the enemy fled with such precipitation that they abandoned two machine-

guns and six howitzers already charged with shell. Soon afterwards they returned and delivered a counter-attack ; but the Serbs had meantime been reinforced by a company hitherto kept in reserve, and the onslaught was beaten off.

Semlin now lay at the mercy of King Peter's soldiers, but there was no intention to endeavour to hold so untenable a position ; and, after putting the howitzers out of action, the Serbs carried off the two machine-guns and ammunition to Beograd, and themselves retired.

The moral effect of this little affair was as great as had been intended. The Austrians thereafter realised that their position at Semlin was precarious, the forts at Bizania maintained an "eloquent silence" for several weeks, and Beograd enjoyed a freedom from bombardment as unaccustomed as it was grateful to the inhabitants.

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Unfortunately for Serbia, the menace of the Austrian monitors could not be removed by brilliant little raids such as that on Bizania. At the outbreak of war the enemy possessed six of these formidable river craft—two were stationed on the Danube with headquarters at Peterwarden and Semlin, and four on the Sava with headquarters at Mitrovitz. Two new monitors were under construction at Budapest, but, as a result of strikes, the first was not completed until the end of October 1914.

In order to counter the activities of these craft, the Serbs had constructed floating mines at their arsenal at Kragouyevatz and had placed them between Military Island (off Beograd) and the Austrian shore of the Danube, where, with four Whitehead torpedoes in floating tubes, they assisted in the defence of the capital. In addition, a Russian naval detachment of two officers and fifty-one men under Lieutenant Volkovisky had laid down mine-fields in the Sava at Dulkovo (by Obrenovatz), near Beograd railway station, and at Orosatchatz (east of Shabatz).

Despite these precautions, the monitors succeeded in annoying and hampering the Serbian military operations in Matchva to an insupportable degree. Night after

night they perambulated the Sava, disclosing the positions with searchlights and pounding shrapnel into distant trenches and pompoms into those on the water's edge. Serbian shell (no armour-piercing projectiles were available) only glanced off their heavily armoured and rounded hulls. Even when a missile from a 12 cm. siege-gun caught them amidships they just rolled, shook themselves, and puffed merrily about their death-dealing business. The attempts to mine them had so far failed, and the craft continued to disport themselves with impunity within 200 yards of Serbian rifles.

On the night of October 22nd-23rd a band of Serbian engineers went down to the Sava at the Shabatz Customs House, with intent to put down a new mine-field. It was an operation of a very hazardous nature, for the enemy was known to be on the alert across the waters.

All was quiet, deathly quiet, on the river. Men spoke in whispers. Slaves of Madame Nicotine—and they were many—groped their way across the sward to the cover of a ruined house and smoked a precious cigarette. Away to the north, but a couple of miles distant, where the Austrians had a foothold in Serbia and where the rival trenches were but a hundred yards apart, a violent combat was raging. Beyond the impenetrable darkness night was turned into day as the petards fired from the Austrian trenches and the searchlights from the monitors flooded the battle-ground with a dazzling light. A tremendous amount of ammunition was being expended—probably with but little result.

Then, from far away down the river, there came the sound as of a puffing railway engine. Louder and louder it grew, until the dark, phantom hulls of two monitors, riding abreast, churned their way past the Customs House and proceeded, unchallenged and unchallenging, on their journey north. Thus far, luck was with the Serbs. The boats had gone up the river; sooner or later they would descend, and then—well, it depended on a continuance of the good fortune.

Silently the engineers placed a little flat-bottomed fishing-boat in the water, took their seats, and prepared to make a short reconnaissance, when from far away on

the Austrian shore a bright white eye gleamed out of the blackness of the night and spread its illuminating beams around. Slowly and regularly the searchlight swept the land until it covered the Serbian row-boat with its glare and stopped, wonderingly, before proceeding on its way.

Still there came no sign from the trenches opposite. The men shoved off and paddled their frail craft about the river, the more to provoke the enemy, while the silence remained unbroken save for the rumble of guns and the cackle of rifles from the battle-field beyond. The night grew yet darker and a thin mist rose from the waters. The Serbs waited, waited it seemed eternally in the cold, black night until, with a suddenness that pierced the very soul, there broke on the silence the sudden crash of an Austrian battery—and the Serbian mine-laying expedition was at an end.

As the survivors trudged southward the firing ceased. Ere long the monitors were heard descending the river, and the murmur of the screws grew louder and louder until the gliding phantoms slipped past and on towards the Russian mine-field. They had successfully avoided it a score of times, but this night the offside craft (the *Temes*) crashed into the death-trap. There was a tremendous roar, a wave of flame shot high into the air, the stricken ship jumped into the night, shivered from end to end, and then, with a sickening lurch, settled slowly, mournfully, down into its watery tomb.

CHAPTER VII

THE THIRD AUSTRIAN INVASION

THE BATTLE OF THE KOLOUBARA

WE have seen that, during the first three months of the war, Austria operated two distinct invasions of Serbia. The First Invasion (the ill-fated *Strafexpedition*) was defeated in the valley of the Yadar; the Second, undertaken by the enemy doubtless with the object of eliminating once and for all the menace in the south-eastern theatre, was scarcely less disastrous to the Teuton cause. During this period Serbia had rendered very precious service to the Allies by nailing down on her frontiers a hostile force some 250,000 strong, and it is possible that the winter of 1914 would have been an epoch of rest and recuperation for King Peter's soldiers, had not the entry of Turkey on the side of the Central Empires (October 7th) enormously extended the area covered by the general operations and made the possession of the railway from Beograd to Constantinople imperative if the Kaiser was to establish communications with his latest Ally.

One immediate effect of this new and untoward development was to endow the operations of the Serbian Army with a more vital interest. That it would sooner or later become necessary for the Entente to take offensive action with the object of cutting off the Turk from Europe and opening up a warm-water route to Russia, was a military deduction as self-evident as the natural corollary that Austria would seek to forestall them by breaking through Serbia to Bulgaria and linking up with the Ottoman forces in Thrace. The Austrian authorities

were aware that Bulgarian co-operation with them was merely a matter of time and strategy, and they accordingly regarded the Serbian Army not only as the unique rampart which blocked their progress to the Golden Horn, but as the slender thread upon which hung Britain's chance of forcing the Straits.

Unfortunately, this appreciation of the military situation does not appear to have made a very pressing appeal to the Allies, for whereas a recognition of its potentialities would have led to the strengthening of the Serbian Army by every means possible, the fact is that, while the Serbs were daily dispensing a very moderate amount of shell in an effort to preserve the inviolability of their frontiers, the Allies failed to make good even the deficiency in ammunition thus created. So marked did the Serbian shortage become that, towards the end of the six weeks of siege warfare, the ratio of shell spent by Austrians and Serbians was as ten to one.

The men had been subjected to a murderous fire from the hostile guns with little or no support from their own batteries, and, though steps were taken to keep them in ignorance of the cause, the infantry gradually lost confidence in their artillery—a condition which made inevitably for demoralisation. In addition, the Serbs were physically worn out. So extended was the line in proportion to the strength of the army that the troops had, perforce, to remain day and night without relief and often without repose in the sector of muddy earthworks that had been allotted to them. The nerve-racking strain thus imposed became insupportable, and matters were worsened by the absence of cover, clothes, and boots, and an insufficiency of food.

With the coming of winter the difficulties of the situation increased. The trenches along the river-side, and on the water-logged plain of Matchva, became almost untenable; the Austrian attacks increased in intensity; the preponderance in numbers and weight of metal possessed by the enemy grew almost daily; the Serbian stocks of gun ammunition fell lower and lower; and the men showed clear evidence of mental and bodily fatigue, due to their constant vigil in the firing-line. In the

meantime, the Austrians had brought up against the Serbian front many new formations, in preparation for a Third Invasion, and, on October 28th, they subjected the whole line to an intense bombardment, with a view to unmasking the disposition of the Serbian armies. Although the deluge of shell failed to secure its immediate object—for it provoked no reply from the east of the Drina—it was accepted as a notification of impending attack, and, it having become necessary at length to subordinate local political considerations to the dictates of military strategy, the order was given on November 1st to retire the Serbian 2nd Army from the exposed Matchva plain to the foothills of the Tser Mountains and the watershed of the Dobrava River. In its initial conception the retreat was an operation planned for purely strategical reasons, and it was hoped that the possession of points of vantage on the hill-tops would compensate for the empty caissons of the artillery.

During the night of November 5th-6th the hostile bombardment recommenced over a more extended area, being particularly vigorous in the neighbourhood of Gouchevo (Serbian 3rd Army), and during the succeeding days its intensity steadily increased owing to the introduction of heavy artillery stationed on the left bank of the Drina. November 6th, therefore, may be fixed upon as the date of the Third Invasion of Serbia—that glorious page in the history of the Allied campaigns known as the “Battle of the Koloubara.”

There had been a considerable regrouping of the forces during and after the Second Invasion, and upon the date in question the two armies were concentrated as follows :

THE SERBIAN ARMY

Independent Units :

The Detachment of Kraïna.	{	Concentrated: Kladovo-Souva Reka (Danube front).
		Composition: 4 battalions of 3rd Ban infantry with 10 de Bange guns.
The Detachment of Branitchevo.	{	Concentrated: Souva Reka-River Brestovatz (Danube front).
		Composition: 8 battalions of infantry with 3 batteries of de Bange (18 guns).

Independent Units.

The Detachment of Beograd.	{	Commander: General Jivcovitch.
		Concentrated: River Brestovatz—River Petchina.
		Composition: 17 battalions of infantry (4 × 1st Ban; 13 × 3rd Ban);
		3 batteries of Field Artillery (12 Q.-F. guns).
		3 batteries of Field Artillery (18 de Bange guns).
The Detachment of Obrenovatz.	{	3 Howitzer batteries (12 × 12 cm. Q.-F. guns).
		1 siege battery (2 × 12 cm. guns).
		1 squadron of cavalry. ¹
		Concentrated: River Petchina—River Voukodge.
		Composition: 6 battalions of infantry with 3 batteries of artillery.

SECOND ARMY

Commander: Marshal Stepan Stepanovitch. Concentrated: Mishar-Shabatz-Shtitar-Dobritch-Vidoyevitza.

Division.	Composition.
Morava I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions), 9 batteries of artillery (36 Q.-F. guns) and 3 squadrons of cavalry.
Timok I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions), 9 batteries of artillery (36 Q.-F. guns) and 3 squadrons of cavalry.
Shoumadia I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions), 9 batteries of artillery (36 Q.-F. guns) 3 squadrons of cavalry.
Timok II . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions), 3 batteries of artillery (12 Q.-F. guns), 2 squadrons of cavalry.
Shabatz town-guard	3 battalions of infantry with 2 batteries (12 de Bange guns).
Independent Cavalry Division . . .	4 regiments of cavalry (16 squadrons) with 2 batteries (8 Q.-F. guns) of horse artillery.
Total effective of 2nd Army.	63 battalions of infantry; 34 batteries of artillery; 27 squadrons of cavalry.

THIRD ARMY

Commander: General Yourishitch-Stürm.² Concentrated: River Yadar-Kostaïnik

Division.	Composition.
Combined . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions), 6 batteries of artillery (24 Q.-F. guns), 2 squadrons of cavalry.

¹ Early in November, 1914, a French naval detachment under Commandant Picot arrived at Beograd in charge of a battery of 3, 14 cm. naval guns, two of which were mounted during the battle of Koloubara. The third was kept in reserve at Ralya.

² General Paul Yourishitch-Sturm was one of the romantic figures of the Great War. By birth a Prussian, he fought for his native land in the Franco-German War of 1870, and soon afterwards arrived

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Division.	Composition.
Drina I . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions), 9 batteries of artillery (36 Q.-F. guns), and 2 squadrons of cavalry.
Drina II . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions), 3 batteries of artillery (12 Q.-F. guns), and 2 squadrons of cavalry.
Total effective of 3rd Army.	40 battalions of infantry, 18 batteries, 6 squadrons.

FIRST ARMY

Commander : General Petar Boyovitch. Concentrated : on a line drawn from Kostainik to the mouth of the river Ouzovnitza, with outposts in the direction of the river Triyeshnitza.

Division.	Composition.
Morava II . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions), 10 batteries of artillery (40 Q.-F. guns), and 2 squadrons of cavalry.
Danube I . . .	4 regiments of infantry (16 battalions), 9 1/2 batteries of artillery (38 Q.-F. guns), and 3 squadrons of cavalry.
Danube II . . .	3 regiments of infantry (12 battalions), 3 batteries of artillery (12 Q.-F. guns), and 4 squadrons of cavalry.
Detachment of Lyoubovitch.	4 battalions of infantry with 2 batteries of de Bange (12 guns).
Total effective of 1st Army.	44 battalions of infantry, 24½ batteries ; 9 squadrons.

Plus the Roudnik detachment of volunteers at Lyoubovya.

in Serbia with his brother, bent upon further military adventure in the threatened Turko-Serbian conflict. He was admitted to the Serbian army as a sub-lieutenant, and fought in the Turko-Serbian campaign of 1876 as a battalion commander and went through the succeeding war of 1877 at the head of a regiment. The Serbo-Bulgar War of 1885 found him again commanding a regiment with the rank of Major.

In 1908 Yourishitch was appointed first adjutant to King Peter, a dignity which he continued to enjoy during the Great War. In the First Balkan War he commanded the Drina I Division with such distinction that he was promoted to the grade of General. During the Second Balkan War he led the Danube I Division against the Bulgarians.

At the outbreak of hostilities with Austria-Hungary in 1914 he was nominated to the command of the 3rd Army, in which capacity he added to his reputation as one of the bravest and most competent of Serbian military leaders. His Prussian origin proved no impediment to his devotion to his chosen country or to his speedy advancement. He enjoyed the fullest confidence of King Peter, and as a patriot had no superior among even the native-born Serbians.

OUZHITSE ARMY

Commander : General Aratitch. Concentrated : From the river Triyeshnitza along the bank of the Drina to the river Lym.

Division.	Composition.
Shoumadia II	3 regiments of infantry (15 battalions). 8 batteries of artillery (mixed), and 2 squadrons.
Detachment of Lym	7 battalions of infantry with 2 batteries of artillery (mixed).
Brigade of Ouzhitse	12 battalions of infantry with 2 batteries of artillery (mixed).

Total effective of } 34 battalions of infantry, 12 batteries, 2 Ouzhitse Army. } squadrons.

South of the Lym the line was taken over by the Montenegrin Army.

With the addition of sundry Corps troops and reserves not recited in the above disposition, the Serbian Army in campaign (excluding the detachments of Kraina and Branitchievo) comprised a total of :

Infantry	204 battalions (of which 25 battalions were 3rd Ban troops), 150 machine-guns.
Cavalry	41 squadrons of cavalry.
Artillery	Field Artillery (Q.-F.), 57 batteries (228 guns). Mountain Artillery (Q.-F.), 9 batteries (36 guns). Howitzers (Q.-F.), 9 batteries (36 guns). de Bange artillery, 26 batteries (156 guns).

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN ARMY

Commander-in-Chief : General Potiorek

Concentration.	Units.
Lying along the Danube and Sava from Orshovatz to the vicinity of Shabatz.	Frontier troops to a total of about 55 battalions with sundry batteries.
From Shabatz to Mitrovitza.	
Bosout-Biyelyina	21st Division of the 8th Corps and 29th Division of the 9th Corps, 14th Brigade of the 13th Corps, and 32nd Regiment of Honved, plus "battalions de marche"—(the whole totaling about 43 battalions).
Lyeshnitza-Loznitza	9th Division of 8th Corps, 3 regiments of 26th Division of the 13th Corps, and several battalions of sharpshooters (a total of 30 battalions).
Loznitza-Lyoubovya	42nd Division of Honved (14 battalions). 15th Corps, 16th Corps, 13th Brigade of the 13th Corps, 40th Division of Honved, 47th and 87th infantry regiments, and 53rd Regiment of 36th Division and sundry corps troops (a total of 110 battalions).
South of Vlasenitza	One to two brigades.

The Austrian Army may, therefore, be assessed at

about 265 battalions of infantry with a full complement of field, siege, and mountain artillery—a total force greatly in excess of that possessed by the Serbians.

It will be observed that, for the purpose of the Third Invasion, the Austrian Staff had remained true to their determination to strike across the Drina, but that on this occasion they had concentrated their principal forces in what we have already termed the southern sector of this theatre. Between Loznitza and Lyoubovya they had massed no fewer than 110 battalions of infantry against the 72 battalions possessed by the Serbs.¹ There can be little doubt that, in thus selecting deliberately the most difficult terrain on the whole frontier for his principal attack, General Potiorek relied very greatly upon his superiority in heavy and mountain artillery. In this decision he was well advised, for throughout the advance his superbly equipped 15th and 16th Mountain Corps proved a thorn in the side of the Serbian defenders, and were ever prominent in those outflanking movements which often succeeded in annulling the fierce resistance offered by King Peter's infantry. Valyevo was again his initial objective, and he planned to complete the conquest of the Gouchevo-Boranya-Yagodnya ranges, and then proceed in a concentric advance toward his goal via Zavlaka-Kroupagn and Petska.

In view of the fact that the possession of the heights was already disputed by the two armies, the terrain over which the Austrians directed their principal attack was not favourable to defensive operations. The country was extremely mountainous, thickly wooded, and cut up by profound valleys which served to divide the Serbian forces and interfere with the liaison between the various divisions, and to complicate any attempt to render reciprocal assistance. The communications with the rear were limited and difficult. The roads, badly constructed on a foundation of clay, were in a horrible condition as a result of the heavy traffic which had already passed over them, and the troops in retreat were often caught by hostile shell-fire at a time when they were in a highly disorganised state.

¹ Danube II Div. did not come up until November 7.

It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the fighting in what the Austrians had chosen to make the dominant theatre of operations partook strictly of the nature of mountain warfare, for which, as it so happened, the Serbs were singularly ill equipped. In the case of General Potiorek's troops the chief burden of the siege operations had been borne by the artillery, thus according the infantry ample opportunity for repose, and the moral factor profited accordingly. In point of equipment there was, of course, no comparison to be made between the opposing forces. That of the Austrians was excellent in all respects. The forces had been specially organised and furnished for manœuvres over mountainous lands, and the experience gained and lessons learned during the course of the preceding invasions had been turned to good account. It is not too much to say that, in point of view of numbers, material, experience, and supplies of ammunition, General Potiorek had at his disposal all the elements of complete success.

The voluntary withdrawal of the Serbian 2nd Army from Matchva has already been recorded, and the way was now clear for the enemy to penetrate into the plain without opposition. The first shock of battle was, therefore, felt in the southern sector. The Serbs (Combined Division of the 3rd Army) were holding the northern extremity of Gouchevo, and on November 7th the Austrians brought up heavy guns to the left bank of the Drina and subjected the summit to an intense artillery preparation. An infantry attack followed. Six times were the invaders repulsed with heavy losses; but the seventh onslaught succeeded, and the defenders, frightfully handicapped by the shortage of artillery ammunition, were obliged to fall back under fire to the Shtira River. This retirement, coupled with the general pressure, involved the whole of the 3rd Army in a withdrawal in order to defend the Yadar road in the direction of Zavlaka. Farther south, the 1st Army, despite reinforcement by the Danube 11 Division, gave way under similar circumstances; and, while the principal forces of the Ouzhitse Army held their own ground and resisted the attempted crossing of the Drina, that section which

had been guarding the line between the rivers Triyeshnitza and Rogachitza was forced back on to the Tservena Stena-Zapolie positions, situated some four miles in the rear.

November 8th saw the approach of the Austrians to the positions occupied by the 2nd Army, which, with the exception of a salient thrown out to protect Shabatz, may be said to have entrenched on the foothills of the Tser range and the watershed of the Dobrava River. The enemy found themselves opposed by a very feeble resistance, for, truth to tell, in point of ammunition the 2nd Army was at a disadvantage when compared with the troops in the south. The Morava I Division, for example, possessed only 175 shells per gun, and the other units were scarcely more liberally supplied. Thus, under cover of artillery fire from their heavy gun batteries and river monitors, the Austrians had no difficulty in advancing up to distances varying from 500 to 2,500 yards from the Serbian trenches, where they dug themselves in. In the Shabatz sector the utmost advantage was taken of the 400 yards of water which divided the two combatants, and all attempts to cross were repulsed (with the exception of a surprise exploit about a mile from the mouth of the Dobrava, which landed a single hostile company on Serbian soil). This success, under singularly unfavourable circumstances, was a happy augury for the future, and Marshal Stepanovitch was, therefore, ordered to stand fast, but, in case of need, to retire on to the right bank of the Dobrava and swing his line backwards until he found a *point d'appui* on the western slopes of the Tser Mountains near Slatina. In these positions he protected the approach to Valyevo from the Matchva district.

Farther south, the situation was such as to occasion the gravest misgiving. No sooner had the 3rd Army occupied its first positions for the defence of the Yadar road than the Austrians pierced its liaison with the 1st Army by carrying Kostainik, and thus forced another retirement. In effect, the 1st Army itself was already doing badly. The enemy were attacking strenuously with an artillery which far out-classed that at the disposal of General Boyovitch, and their infiltration was greatly

facilitated by a thick fog, under cover of which they penetrated down the ravines and massed for attack unseen by the defenders.

As the invasion developed, Marshal Poutnik found no alternative to the plan of retreating again to positions more favourable to defence, and, while harassing the enemy, to draw him farther from his base the while the Serbs approached nearer to their own railheads at Valyevo and Ouzhitse. It was also felt that the condition of the roads would make it difficult for the Austrians to transport their 18 and 28 cm. guns and to bring up supplies of food and ammunition.

A general retirement eastward from the Yadar was accordingly ordered. The 3rd Army was brought back to the line Kosaningrad (706)—Strazha (424)—Zavlaka-Bachstavsko brdo, to defend the direction Osechina-Valyevo. The 1st Army was ordered to take up and strongly fortify the positions Soldatovitchegai-Petrina Stena-Sokolska Planina-Proslop, to protect the road Petska-Valyevo. The Ouzhitse Army, while it had hitherto put up a firm opposition to the invaders, was instructed to give way in sympathy with the new plan and retire to a new line for the defence of the town of Ouzhitse.

The withdrawal was successfully carried out, and there is little doubt that, on anything like equal terms, the Serbs would have been able to stem the enemy advance, at any rate for some time. Unfortunately, however, the superiority in men, guns, and munitions possessed by the Austrians far exceeded even the most extravagant estimates of the General Staff, and this fact, added to the increasing demoralisation apparent in the Serbian ranks, decided Marshal Poutnik to refuse decisive battle and operate a general retirement to the last line of defence before Valyevo, when the armies were grouped on the following positions :

		Concentration.
Detachment of Obrenovatz . . .		Mouth of the Koloubara to Skela (Railhead : Arandyelovatz).
2nd Army . . .		Oub-Karaoula - Blizanski Visovi (366) (Railheads : Valyevo and Lazarevatz).

	Concentration.	
3rd Army . . .	(38) Iaoutina-Prosek ¹ -Kamenitza (Railhead : Valyevo).	
1st Army . . .	Yolina Breza-Stave-Sovlyachki Kik — (507) (Railhead : Valyevo).	
Ouzhitse Army . .	Shargan-Vishegrad—River Lym (Railhead : Ouzhitse).	

The new line was occupied on November 12th, and at that critical moment in the history of the battle the enemy forces were grouped as follows :

Concentration.	Units.
Before the 2nd Army	The 9th and 21st Divisions of 8th Corps, 29th Division of 9th Corps, 26th division and 14th Brigade of 13th, and certain Landsturm detachments.
Before the 3rd Army	The 13th Brigade of 13th Corps, 35th Division of 13th Corps, 42nd Division of Honved, 40th Division of Honved, and 7th and 9th Mountain Brigades of 15th Corps.
Before the 1st Army	The 10th Mountain Brigade, 38th Division of 15th Corps, 8th Mountain Brigade of 1st Division of 15th Corps, 2nd, 4th, 8th, and 13th Mountain Brigades of 18th Division of 16th Corps, and 4th and 5th Brigades of the 47th Division of 16th Corps.
Before the Ouzhitse Army . . .	The 1st and 14th Brigades of 16th Corps and 1st and 2nd Brigades of Landsturm.

In ordering the retreat to the Valyevo line, the General Staff had every confidence that a determined resistance would be offered to the oncoming hosts. For the first time it may be said that the positions possessed advantages for the defence, and the importance of the town itself was so well understood by the rank and file of the army that it was assumed that every effort would be put forward to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy. No sooner were the troops established on the newly fortified positions, however, than it became evident that these hopes must be abandoned. The morale of the men, strained as it had been by physical exhaustion, constant exposure to inclement weather without sufficient clothing or camp equipment, and the absence of support from the artillery (due to the general lack of ammunition),

¹ To avoid overcrowding, a few of the positions mentioned in the text have necessarily been omitted from the map. For the same reason the heights of the mountains are given in metres instead of feet, and are sometimes employed instead of the place-names.

failed to resist the depression caused by the continued retreat, and finally snapped entirely. The Austrians had succeeded in transporting guns of great range and calibre, and, relying principally upon this arm, they inflicted enormous losses in the Serbian ranks.

True, new levies were drafted into Valyevo in their thousands; but they were an untrained horde, possessed of no kit save a mess-tin and a Russian rifle (with the mechanism of which they were unfamiliar), and no uniform but a Serbian service-cap. They would arrive in the morning, spend the night on café-floors, and the next day march off in the torrential rain, singing and happy, to take their place in the conflict. Thus their presence in the fighting line, far from being an addition to the strength of the armies and raising the morale thereof, merely tended to make confusion worse confounded. Finally, the presence of masses of refugees trekking back in a state of deplorable misery unmanned the troops, the effect being particularly noticeable among the men of the Drina divisions, who were recruited from the evacuated territory and many of whom deserted their units in order to go to the assistance of their families.

The only remedy for a situation of this description lay in a vigorous offensive, and, since this was impossible without artillery ammunition, Valyevo was hurriedly evacuated and Marshal Poutnik ordered the armies back on to the celebrated Koloubara positions.¹

Valyevo, the occupation of which gave rise to such rejoicings in the Dual Monarchy that the Emperor founded a new Order and bestowed its first decoration upon General Potiorek, the Austrian Commander, was a town

¹ In the meantime (November 9th) the enemy had attempted a strong diversion near Smederevo, with the object of ascending the valley of the Morava. The feeble outposts of 3rd Ban troops there stationed were unable to oppose the crossing of the Danube, and consequently retired to await reinforcements. These were despatched from Beograd in the shape of a further detachment of 3rd Ban and Macedonians, who executed a forced march of twenty-eight miles during the day, and in the evening joined their comrades in a successful attack on the enemy installed on Serbian soil. The Austrians were speedily routed by the infantry, the while a curtain-fire of shrapnel cut off their retreat by the river. Of the 4,000 invaders, 2,300 were captured, and the rest, for the most part, were either killed or drowned in the Danube.

of considerable strategical importance. The centre of a series of routes which led to it from Shabatz and the Drina River and from it to Obrenovatz, Beograd, and Kragouyevatz, it was also the railhead of a light railway which joined up with the European line at Mladenovatz, and of another which found its northern terminus at Obrenovatz. Its capture was, therefore, the first stage in the progress towards Kragouyevatz, Nish, and Constantinople; but, having regard to the ease with which it had been taken, the jubilations which followed at Vienna were hardly justified. The result of the two previous invasions had apparently failed to convince the Austrians of the seriousness of the task which they had undertaken, and they appear also to have under-estimated both the difficulties that lay before them in the way of a veteran army fighting for its very existence in its own lair, and the numerous obstacles presented by the question of transport over the switchback highways of levelled earth which serve for roads in Central Serbia. They did not appreciate the strategical value of mud. Consequently the score of cannon which the Serbs were compelled to abandon, were hailed as evidences of hardly-fought and dearly-won battles; the outposts who were captured and the faint-hearted who surrendered, were accepted as signs of a complete rout which had not yet set in.

If, however, the Austrian success served rather to depress than to demoralise further the Serbs, it had a most timely effect upon their own soldiers. To the Austrian army, lacking in homogeneity, devoid of all national patriotism, and bound together only by the chains of discipline, victory was a great essential. To those of its members who had but little interest in the cause for which they were fighting, it supplied an inspiration which had previously been non-existent.

During the days which intervened between the completion of the original concentration and the Austrian First Invasion of August 12th, what is generally referred to as the Koloubara line had been strongly entrenched, and, even prior to the actual capitulation of Valyevo, it had been understood that the supreme effort to stay

the progress of the enemy would be made from those fortifications. In itself the Koloubara River presented no insurmountable obstacle to the advancing enemy. It was neither very wide nor very deep ; but its approaches were here and there devoid of cover, and at other points they were commanded by formidable mountain heights, so that, in the hands of a determined defence, it should have proved difficult to negotiate.

Roughly indicated, the new front was formed in the north by the lower reaches of the Koloubara. A little to the south-west of Lazarevatz it adopted the watershed of the river Lyg and entered country of an exceedingly rugged nature. From the source of the Lyg, the Serbs had fortified the Yelyak and Malyen ranges, which controlled the various routes converging upon Kragouyevatz, and, proceeding in a south-westerly direction, they had likewise thrown up earthworks upon the Boukovi, Varda, Yelova, Boukovic, Miloshevatz, and Leshka Gora ranges, which barred an advance towards the western Morava Valley. The entire theatre of the subsequent operations, which, for the sake of explanation, may be said to have been encompassed in a triangle having its angles at Beograd, Shabatz, and Gorni Milanovatz, was a jumble of mountains and valleys, possessing scarce a square mile of flat country and practically devoid of anything in the nature of a decent military road. The prevailing climatic conditions were unusually bad, even for the time of year, and heavy falls of snow alternating with autumnal rains had turned the routes into quagmires. This, however, merely hindered military manœuvres, for it was soon to be demonstrated that, contrary to the general impression, campaigning in Serbia was practicable in all seasons.

It would, nevertheless, be idle to suggest that the withdrawal was an easy matter. Only two roads (Valjevo-Mionitza and Oub-Lazarevatz) were available for the operation, and these were unequal highways of poor quality which had been rendered almost impassable by the recent rains. This naturally led to much confusion in retiring, and, to make matters worse, the communications were greatly encumbered by the fleeing

civilian populations who plodded back side by side with the soldiers. As a consequence, much valuable impedimenta was jettisoned *en route*, and on account of this, and the losses occasioned while fighting rear-guard actions under adverse circumstances, the divisions reached the Koloubara lines in a sadly depleted state. For example, the Combined—one of the finest of the Serbian divisions, and which was by no means the worst affected—only mustered 7,550 bayonets out of its sixteen battalions, and, of its 24 guns, only 12 were brought back. The morale of the men, too, suffered further by the continued withdrawal. Accustomed as they were to victory, they were unable to understand the necessity of evacuating almost without combat a series of strong positions which had been well entrenched. The trials of the refugees (particularly of the women and children) who blocked the routes, congested the cross-roads, crammed every nook and cranny of the towns and villages, and recounted exaggerated stories of enemy preponderance, exercised a most depressing effect upon the soldiers, and, as we have seen already, many of them, particularly those hailing from the invaded territories, deserted their units in order to succour their families. They were, moreover, physically worn out. The long and arduous marches along highways ankle-deep, and often knee-deep, in mud, coupled with the work of fortifying new positions, had greatly reduced their powers of resistance.

There were only two favourable omens. One was the fact that, though the armies had been forced back, there had been nothing precipitate about the retreat. So far as the Staffs were concerned, the orders issued were models of calm deliberation and carefully-thought-out and detailed plans. During the retirement all bridges, telephone and telegraph lines were systematically destroyed, the cattle were evacuated, and little was left undone to render the advance of the enemy as difficult as possible. Among the corps of field officers, too, the spirit of patriotism and discipline was well maintained, so that the divisions and units preserved their organisation intact, and were able rapidly to undertake their mission when the new lines of defence were reached. The

other satisfactory indication lay in the combative spirit still prevalent among the majority of the rank and file. Their desire was to measure themselves with the enemy, to put a term to the seemingly interminable retreats, for, although they were being steadily reduced by fatigue and suffering, they still believed themselves capable of demonstrating their superiority if allowed to fight it out with the invaders.

The Koloubara-Lyg positions were reached, in accordance with the plan drawn up by the General Staff, on November 16th, when the disposition of the Serbian armies was as follows :

The " Detachment of Obrenovatz " .	Held Obrenovatz and south to Konatitza, where the Independent Cavalry was installed on the right bank of the Koloubara and formed a liaison with
The 2nd Army .	Holding the front Volouyak-Lazarevatz-Tchovka.
The 3rd Army .	Occupied the Lyg River from Tchiboutkovitza to Ivanovatz.
The 1st Army .	Held the mountain fastnesses extending Goukoshi-Mednik-Batchinatz-Rouda-Malyen, astride the roads leading to Gorni Milanovatz, and the
Ouzhitse Army .	Grouped for the defence of Ouzhitse and the Western Morava Valley, was on a line running from a point S.W. of Yasenovatz through the Vk. Prishedo, along the Yelova crests; following which it crossed the road and joined the tors of the Leshka gora.

The whole line was naturally formidable, an excellent field of view was generally obtainable, and sufficient time had been available for its adequate fortification. Therefore, even admitting the shortage of gun ammunition, the confidence of the Serbian Staff appeared to be justified by the circumstances, although it may with reason be suggested that Marshal Poutnik was endeavouring to hold a very extended front with the comparatively small forces at his disposal.

The Austrian attack on certain sectors of the new line commenced on November 17th. In the north, the appearance of important forces in the vicinity of Konatitza indicated an intention to seize that town, and in the south the enemy units were making towards Kosyeritch,

driving in the Serbian rear-guards. The 3rd Army was not disturbed in the work of consolidation; but the enemy advanced in strength against the 2nd Army (Tchovka-Vratche brdo (159)—Lazarevatz) and the right wing of the 1st Army (Batchinatz-Goukoshi). His activity against Marshal Stepanovitch's front was at once comprehensible and commendable. Lazarevatz itself was an important point of vantage, and, particularly in view of the weakness of the Serbian centre, the Austrian Staff would have been lacking in appreciation of their undoubted success had they not conceived thus early the idea of working along the Lazarevatz-Mladenovatz railway in order to round up the Serbian Army in its entirety. Against the 1st Army, however, General Potiorek's tactics were less laudable. True, the Goukoshi road was the shortest way to Gorni Milanovatz and Kragouyevatz, and every allowance must be made for the excessively difficult nature of the terrain upon which the drama was being played out; but the fact remains that, if the Austrians had deployed in a more roundabout direction and brought more energetic pressure to bear on Boyovitch's left (Malyen-Rouda) they could at this time have pierced the breach between the 1st and Ouzhitse Armies (a distance of twenty miles separated the two) and conquered the dominating range of Souvobor and forced the evacuation of Goukoshi. This manœuvre would have obliged the Serbs to operate a speedy and disorderly retreat to the positions before Gorni Milanovatz itself, and the Ouzhitse Army might have been cut off from the Western Morava.

As events fell out, the mistake was a fortunate one for the Serbs (and scarcely less, indeed, for the Allies) and though, on the following day (18th), they were shelled from off part of the Goukoshi range, they had been able to strengthen their left, with the result that Malyen resisted a heavy onslaught on its flank, and Batchinatz, though once lost, was recaptured during a night attack. Advantage was also taken of the Austrians' delay, to re-group the units composing the Ouzhitse Army and establish a liaison with Malyen.

In the meantime, all hostile attacks on the 2nd Army were successfully beaten off. The Tchovka summit was

the most exposed, and was subjected to heavy shell fire and infantry attacks on the flank and rear, but reinforcements of men and guns were sent up in support from the 3rd Army. General Yourishitch had no difficulty in giving this assistance, for, though the enemy was now approaching his forces from two directions (via Vrathevitich and Tsvetanovtshi respectively) he held an exceptionally strong defensive position on the Lyg watershed with his wings pivoted on Tchovka (2nd Army) and on Goukoshi, with the tors lying to its rear (1st Army). No roads led up to his front; the existing tracks were in so bad a condition that the cannon and caissons had to be carried on to the heights which faced him, and, in its then swollen state, the Lyg presented a serious obstacle to any enemy.

Surveying the situation on the night of November 18th, it may be said that it saw both combatants with their formations established on their respective lines and drawn up in battle array. The Austrians had brought up their main forces, and the Serbs, despite a withdrawal in some sectors, had fortified themselves more or less solidly on the formidable positions of the Koloubara-Souvobor-Ovtchar-Kablar. On November 19th, therefore, there commenced, for the Serbs, the era of desperate resistance; for the Austrians, the final thrust which was to deliver the mountain fortresses of Central Serbia into their hands.

The Austrian offensive, though it extended over the whole of the Serbian line, was henceforth noticeable chiefly for the determination to break down the opposition of the 2nd Army in the Lazarevatz sector and drive in the 1st Army towards Gorni Milanovatz. Apart from all questions of the strategic desirability of working a flanking movement round by Mladenovatz, the Serbian possession of Tchovka and the neighbouring height of Vrathe brdo (159) was a constant menace to the Habsburg advance, and it was not surprising that this consideration, combined with the necessity of getting his troops out of the marshy valley of the Koloubara—now rendered exceedingly treacherous by the floods—led General Potiorek to renew his onslaught on those posi-

tions. On November 19th the attack was conducted with such energy that the division in possession (Morava I) was greatly imperilled, and only the timely arrival of reinforcements saved it from disaster. Arrangements were made for the 3rd Army to create a diversion by counter-attacking the Austrian columns the following day; but this intention was necessarily abandoned when it was found that the enemy had extended his offensive not only to the 3rd Army itself, but to the Drina I Division, which had thus far gallantly held on to the summit of Milovatz. The result of day-long fighting was that the Austrians secured a foothold on the western slopes of Vrathe brdo and obtained entire mastery of Milovatz.

It will have been observed that the 1st Army had been persistently driven back, despite the strength of its positions, until the enemy occupied a heavy salient on the principal highways towards Kragouyevatz. In continuing to press their advance in this direction the Austrians doubtless relied upon the fatigue and demoralisation rampant in the Serbian armies, and their own acknowledged superiority in men and material, to protect them from untoward consequences. Against this army alone they were employing the 7th Division of the 13th Corps, the 10th, 11th, and 12th Mountain Brigades of the 48th Division, and the 18th and 47th Divisions of the 16th Mountain Corps—less the 1st and 14th Mountain Brigades, which, together with the 4th and 5th Brigades of similar formation and two or three brigades of Land-sturm, were concentrated against the Ouzhitse Army.

The Austrians were, of course, taking liberties, for there was always a possibility, however remote, that Poutnik would lure them on still farther in the centre, and, by throwing his two wings against their flanks, effect a sudden transformation of the situation. As a matter of fact, the old Marshal actually did contemplate an operation of this description; but, when the suggestion was put before the Commanders in the field, General Yourishitch pointed out that, as his sorely depleted divisions were faced by practically the whole of the 13th Corps, plus the 32nd, 36th, and 40th Divisions, it would be wiser to postpone the execution of the

idea in favour of an attempt to strengthen the right wing of the 1st Army.

Simultaneously with the abandonment of the suggested counter-attack (November 21st) the Austrians began to make more decisive use of their 15th and 16th Mountain Corps—which, in equipment suitable for fighting over this mountainous terrain, far surpassed anything possessed by the Serbians—and turned renewed attentions to the 1st Army, then disposed on: Malyen-Rouda-Batchinatz-Vis (707)—Mednik-Boblye. At early morn, profiting by a thick fog—a very prevalent feature in these highlands at this season—they approached in strong force on the sector Goukoshi-Yovitcha bara-Govedye brdo (454). By dawn heavy fighting had become more or less general, and the Serbian outposts were driven back on to the main lines. The combat developed with great violence against Mednik (the key to all the positions closing the Lyg Valley to the invader), and, thanks to their mobile columns, the Habsburg troops speedily carried the summit and then turned against the flank of the defence on Batchinatz and Rouda. Needless to remark, fighting of a terribly fierce description took place; but, although in such numerical inferiority, the Serbs held on with magnificent tenacity, and it was only towards 8 p.m., as the result of a *coup-de-main* executed in considerable force, that the Austrians succeeded in attaining their object. This unfortunate, if inevitable development was strategically serious in that it threatened the dominating line of crests in Central Serbia: Prostrouga-Rayatz-Souvobor. The Serbs were now completely worn out, and, as it was obvious that the situation could only be retrieved by the introduction into the fray of absolutely fresh troops, which were not available, there was no option save to give ground and reassemble on the front Goukoshi-Boblye-Palezh-Prostrouga-Rayats-Souvobor (684) Malyen.

After this success, it was logical that the Austrians should turn their principal attention to the Malyen positions, if only for the purpose of straightening up their line. In force of five battalions, they now drew a semicircle round the defending outposts on the Yelyak range, and, after day-long battle on the 22nd, drove the

survivors of the single Serbian battalion stationed there back on the main position. The next day they prosecuted their attack on three sides, and, as if to supplement their superiority in numbers and artillery, they were further favoured by a thick fog which in some districts limited the range of vision to a matter of thirty yards. Assisted by this cover, they worked round the summit; but the Serbs, though their companies were now reduced to an average of 100 to 150 men, struggled bravely against overwhelming odds, and, aided by a battalion of reinforcements sent over from Souvobor, held their ground during the whole day. The defenders were, however, obviously fighting a losing hazard, and after battling through the morning of November 24th, the heroic resistance was brought to its inevitable close and the position was evacuated at 1 p.m.

It is remarkable that, having achieved this particular object, General Potiorek did not continue the attack relentlessly. Had he done so, especially in the direction of Goyna Gora, he would have obliged the Ouzhitse Army to retire immediately to the defile Ovtchar-Kablar and forced the evacuation of Souvobor—a development which might have proved fatal for the Serbs at this stage of the battle. He did, indeed, attempt a half-hearted flanking movement down the Kamenitza Valley—which now lay open before him—but a brilliant action on Zeleni breg by a detachment of the Ouzhitse Army effectually checked the progress of the enemy column and arrested a movement which, had it been pressed with greater energy, might early have threatened Tehatchak. It must further be observed that the right wing of the 1st Army had been granted four precious days in which to re-form its ranks and consolidate its positions on Souvobor.

The reason which spared the Serbian Army this speedy disaster was twofold. On the one hand, the Austrians themselves had been badly disorganised and depleted by the long marches over almost impassable routes and the incessant fighting which had followed; on the other hand, the stubborn resistance of the 3rd and 2nd Serbian Armies, which had tenaciously clung to their

positions, driving off all onslaughts and even at times countering with success, had decided the Austrian Staff to draft reinforcements in that direction in order to prosecute more vigorously the attack on Lazarevatz in the direction of Mladenovatz, the while their centre pressed on towards Kragouyevatz and their right progressed steadily down the Western Morava Valley. Theoretically, this strategy was absolutely sound. So far as human intelligence could judge, the Serbian Army had been beaten beyond repair, and it only remained to close in the pincers around Kragouyevatz in order to round up the whole of King Peter's forces, with their arsenal, and deliver over the Balkan Peninsula to Pan-Germanism.

While, therefore, the offensive against the 1st and Ouzhitse Armies continued more slowly, so that contact between the two units was re-established and a necessary regrouping of the Serbian forces on Souvobor rendered practicable, the Austrians proceeded to concentrate ever-increasing forces against the fronts held by the 2nd and 3rd Armies and to envelop the positions from the north—an intention which involved the piercing of the Serbian line between Lazarevatz and Beograd. In consequence of this new manœuvre, the Lazarevatz salient was the scene of a fierce struggle which continued without interruption until the end of November, and, in view of the advantages possessed by the invaders in the matter of men, guns, and munitions, it must be admitted that the Serbian troops offered a most heroic defence. By November 28th, for example, the Timok II Division had been reduced to a total of 1,800 men, and, a few days previously, Marshal Stepanovitch had asked for permission to send his munition-less cannon to the rear, as their inactive presence was exercising a demoralising effect upon his men. He was, however, instructed to retain his arms, and assured that the arrival of a small convoy of shell from Russia via the Danube would permit of their employment in the near future.

The heights of Tchovka and Vrachte brdo (159) were naturally singled out by the enemy for special attention. Against the former position (held by the now decimated Morava I Division) he massed fourteen groups of artil-

lery and four regiments of infantry, and, on November 25th, after an intense artillery preparation, during which the Serbs were shelled out of their trenches, the defending regiments at length ceded the citadel, which they had so long held with dauntless courage against overwhelming odds. Vrachte brdo was likewise abandoned, and these events, combined with increasing pressure on their own fronts, forced the left wing of the 2nd Army and the whole of the 3rd Army to give way in sympathy.

The next day (November 26th) the Austrians prosecuted their offensive in this theatre, and also attempted a further crossing of the Sava near its junction with the Koloubara. Under the protection of a heavy artillery assault, in which they employed three river monitors, 1 battery of mountain-guns, and 6 pieces of field artillery, they threw across an advance company of the 3rd Honved regiment. The Serbs had been forced inland by the bombardment, but, taking advantage of natural cover, they awaited the landing, ambushed the invaders, and wiped out half the contingent. The remainder surrendered, and the diversion was then abandoned.

Nothing can better illustrate the magnificent spirit which still animated the ranks of the 2nd and 3rd Armies than the events of November 27th. Tchovka had only been evacuated after a desperate fight which cost the Serbs heavy casualties, and yet the survivors responded to an order to counter-attack with such *élan* that they recaptured it and took 7 officers and 267 men prisoners. The troops of the 3rd Army, also, distinguished themselves by a counter-attack, as the result of which they re-occupied the important summit of Strazha, which they had lost two days previously, and threw back the enemy towards the Lyg. On November 28th the right wing of the 2nd Army turned savagely upon one of the invading columns which was seeking to work round to the north and practically annihilated it, inflicting very heavy casualties in killed and wounded and taking 34 officers and 2,069 men prisoners.

Now, despite the fact that the Serbs were so outweighed that they were unable to consolidate the

ground gained as the result of such brilliant little exploits as have been cited, the advance of the Habsburgers was thereby retarded at a very critical period, and, although the retreat to new positions continued, time was accorded to the General Staff to withdraw the Detachment of Beograd from the capital and install it on the line Varovnitza-Kosmaï and there erect a barrier against the 8th and Combined Austrian Army Corps which, throughout the last week of November, had been working round in the direction of Mladenovatz and the Morava Valley.

The decision to abandon Beograd was taken with a heavy heart. Its heroic defence had been the pride of the Serbian peoples, and even now it was in no immediate danger from across the Sava. Towns and cities, however, are mere landmarks in modern warfare. Bricks and mortar have little military value as compared with men and guns, and though the garrison could have withstood a fairly prolonged siege, reasons of strategy imposed a shortening of the long Serbian line and the employment, to tactical purpose, of every man fit to carry a rifle. The Habsburg armies had gripped the heart of Serbia, and there was no place for sentiment in the consideration of the problem with which the Staff were wrestling in the Hôtel de Ville of Kragouyevatz.

The order for the voluntary evacuation of the metropolis was given on November 28th, and executed during the night of the 29th-30th. On December 1st the troops of the Dual Monarchy made their unopposed entry into the city with flags flying and bands playing. There was much merry-making, much feasting and drinking. The Hungarian flag floated from the Palace, and twelve peasants were hanged in the centre of the town. The news of the "conquest" was flashed to Vienna, Berlin, and Sofia, where it was the occasion of great and enthusiastic rejoicings.

With the Serbs, there necessarily departed also the members of the small British, Russian, and French missions. The British unit, which will be the subject of special comment in a later chapter, had scientifically mined the rivers, and succeeded thus in keeping the monitors at a respectful distance; but their

more ambitious plans were interrupted by the order to return post-haste to Nish. The French Mission alone had been provided with artillery. Under Commander Picot (himself subordinate to Commander Hubert Cardale, R.N.), they had placed two of their 14 cm. naval guns in position to the east of Beograd, and sent their first message into Hungary on November 21st. Preparations for an Anglo-French offensive were afoot when the sudden and unwelcome instructions were received to abandon the citadel and retire southward with all the material that could be saved. The French saw themselves obliged to sacrifice their cannon, but, in the early morning, they fired off their stock of 240 rounds of ammunition, and in little more than half an hour deposited some twelve tons of melinite on the enemy forts at Bizania, with such terrifying effect that the garrison fled twelve miles into the interior. Thus it came to pass that the two strongholds, having snarled at one another across the dividing waters of the Sava for nearly five months, were both evacuated at the same time.

Meanwhile, the Austrian offensive against the 1st and Ouzhitse Armies had continued steadily if more slowly, and the catastrophe occasioned by the loss of the Malyen heights soon became very evident. By November 25th, the enemy had occupied the front Ryor-Malyen-Orlovatcha-Batchinatz-Vis - Babaïtch — positions which not only enabled him to envelop the Serbian advanced groups on Souvobor and Igrishte, but gave him possession of dominating vantage-ground, with lateral communications at his disposal which permitted him to reinforce his troops on any part of the line according to need. The Ouzhitse Army was preoccupied with its task of withdrawing to the Ovtchar-Kablar positions (in order to protect Tchatchak and the Western Morava Valley), a manœuvre rendered exceedingly difficult by the persistent attempt of the Austrian mountain brigades to slip in between the various retreating columns on the one hand, and destroy the liaison between the two armies on the other.

On November 26th the enemy continued the onslaught

on the whole of the Serbian left centre, and left, with greater energy. Desperate efforts were made to hold the vital crest of Goukoshi, and three determined attacks were successfully repulsed; but, in the end, superior numbers and equipment triumphed, and the Staff were obliged to withdraw right back to Goloubatz (496), the line continuing through Prostrouga and Souvobor to Babina Glava. This movement involved the cession of a considerable tract of territory, and it further subjected the extreme right wing of the 1st Army (Drina I) to the danger of being thrown into the Katchar Valley, where its flanks would have been exposed to easy attack, and its communications with the rear and with the 3rd Army would have been threatened. It must be remembered, however, that the situation of the army had become very serious. The enemy had succeeded in securing a firm footing on the right bank of the river Lyg, and there was scarce a sector on the front that had been able to stand firm against the assault. Losses had reduced the Serbian divisions to an average of some 4,500 to 5,000 bayonets each, and there were no reserves wherewith to fill up the gaps in the line. In consequence, the task imposed upon the survivors became more strenuous from day to day, the morale of the troops—already sunk to such a low level that desertions to the rear were occurring—weakened to vanishing point, and the heavy casualties among the corps of officers deprived the Serbs of the one element which might have been relied upon to steady the ranks during such a period of crisis.

The Austrians proceeded to drive in the defending centre and then focused their efforts against the right wing. By the 28th inst. they had thrown the Serbs off the hill Shilyak (881) and Babina Glava, and if they had then attacked vigorously the flank and rear of Prostrouga and Bolkovatz, disorganisation would have followed inevitably, for the Serbs had not a single man at their disposal wherewith to parry such a manœuvre. The action of the enemy was, however, progressive rather than energetic; but, although his slackness permitted the Serbs to escape disaster in this sector, the relief afforded was necessarily of a fleeting

nature, and the General Staff, realising that the fatigue and demoralisation of their troops demanded a temporary cessation of the fighting, ordered a further retirement to new positions.

With the exception of spasmodic bursts of shell-fire, the retreat was not complicated by hostile action. By mid-day on November 29th, the Souvobor-Rayatz sector and part of the Prostrouga crest had been abandoned, and at eventide the Serbs had reached the line Motika (in liaison with 3rd Army)-Glavitza (530) Shtolitse (544)-Galitch (703)-Vaskova Glavitza (627), in liaison with the Ouzhitse Army on Kita (632). The little Serbian left flank had done wonders with the meagre forces available. They had inflicted, and suffered, very heavy losses, and they had contested every inch of the ground with hostile mobile columns advancing along nine different routes, the feeble Shoumadia II Division alone being opposed by no fewer than four Austrian brigades (the 1st, 5th, 13th, and 14th). By dint of much dogged resistance the units succeeded in reaching their allotted positions astride the Western Morava River, against which the enemy was moving in force of thirty battalions, his object being to outflank the whole of the Serbian position by a penetration down the valley to Tchatchak.

The object of Serbian strategy throughout the protracted retreat had been to maintain a hold upon the routes leading to Kragouyevatz, and while any attempt to minimise the importance of the defeats to which King Peter's armies had been subjected would, in the face of the progress realised by the invaders, be ridiculous in the extreme, it may be pointed out that no pitched battle had been fought to a finish, and that the Serbs had consistently withdrawn from one set of positions to another in order to exploit the possibilities of resistance to the utmost. The same principle was again adopted. The new line occupied by the 1st and Ouzhitse Armies—Glavitza (530) Shtolitse (544)-Galitch (703)-Vaskova Glavitza (627)-Kita (632)-Ovtchar-Kablar—barred all possible directions for the advance of the enemy who, from the front Malyen-Souvobor-Prostrouga, were converging towards Gorni Milanovatz-Tchatchak. For-

tunately, the armies of the Monarchy, attenuated by reason of incessant fighting, bad weather, worse roads, faulty commissariat, and important casualties (according to the statements of prisoners, their effectives had been brought up to strength on no fewer than five occasions), advanced very slowly, and time was thus afforded to consolidate the new defensive positions and prepare for the projected evacuation of Kragouyevatz itself. At this stage, it is necessary to note a change in the command of the Serbian 1st Army, General Mishitch,¹ who had hitherto acted as sub-chief of the General Staff under Marshal Poutnik, being sent to Gorni Milanovatz—then Army Headquarters—to replace General Boyovitch.

The end of November marked a very critical stage in the history of the battle, and, indeed, of the military position in South-Eastern Europe, and it is fitting, therefore, to take stock of the situation at that date. The Serbian nation was at that time fully conscious of the fact that its very existence was in jeopardy. The well-equipped armies of the mighty neighbour who sought nothing less than its annihilation had penetrated far into the land, and, to all appearance, would soon complete the destruction of the weary defending forces. But, on the whole, the

¹ General Mishitch (afterwards Field-Marshal Sir Jivion Mishitch, G.C.M.G.), born in 1855 in a village near Valyevo, was the son of a simple peasant. He passed through the Serbian Military Academy with distinction, and in the Serbo-Bulgarian War of 1885 commanded a company of infantry. He afterwards spent several months in the artillery school of Bruck (Austria), and then joined the General Staff of his own army, subsequently becoming Professor of Strategy at the Academy. During the Balkan War of 1912, he was the principal collaborator of Marshal Poutnik, and for his services was promoted to the grade of General. The Balkan War of 1913 saw him again acting as sub-chief to the General Staff, a position which he retained in 1914 up to the date of his nomination to the command of the 1st Army.

In spite of his distinguished career, Mishitch remained a modest man of simple habits. A hard worker, and endowed with great powers of resistance, he was remarkable for his methodical habits and extraordinary *sangfroid*. He possessed a retiring disposition, but a strong will, and stood out as an arch-optimist, among a people with whom optimism was a national characteristic. Throughout the campaign under discussion, he never lost faith in the possibility of a counter-offensive, and it is said of him that, at the most critical moment of November 1914, he turned to the Crown Prince with the remark: "Sire, do not seek salvation in retreat."

Serbs faced the facts with admirable calm and stoicism. They were a little nation fighting a great Empire ; they were worn out by this and previous wars, and short of everything ; and, perhaps more tragic than all, ammunition that had been awaited from richer Allies had been delayed too long. Thus they felt that, even if complete defeat followed, it would be no disgrace.

Yet there were sights sad enough to sicken the stoutest heart among them. Perhaps the most lamentable of all were the refugee civilian populations who fled from the occupied territories. Neither regard for personal safety nor jaded nerves could blunt the senses to the sight of those cartloads of destitute humanity plunging through the mire of the highways or trundling through the towns, halting at every corner, not knowing whither to turn for shelter or sanctuary. They were all strangely alike. The rough, home-built oxen-wagon piled up with mattress, quilt, pots and pans, with perhaps a small table and a few bundles of home-spun clothes. The wagon would creak and crunch as it dropped now into one hidden rut and then into another, the while crying children and aged grandfathers floundered in the mud cheek by jowl with an ambling calf or a mongrel dog ; and women, their multi-coloured clothing thick with melted earth, for the most part drove forward a squealing pig or checked its waywardness with the primitive aid of a rope hitched to its hind-leg. All were cold, hungry, and heart-broken. Whatever thoughts they had were with their loved ones on the battle-field. For them the future was, indeed, black-browed and without hope. And the roads which converged upon Kragouyevatz were alive with hundreds of thousands of these pitiful outcasts, driven thither by the hostile guns, and wandering almost aimlessly on until they added their quota to the flotsam of Nish.

Enough has already been written concerning the state of the Army to render any further digression on that subject well-nigh superfluous. Lack of food, clothing, tents and transport, incessant fighting and marching under arduous conditions, heavy casualties which it was beyond the power of the Staff to make good, and, above all, the absence of ammunition, had done their work.

Fatigued and demoralised, the men sought for extenuating circumstances and, as usual in such instances, found them readily. Like other Balkan peoples, their idea of warfare was a comparatively short, sharp struggle and a speedy home-going, and they persuaded themselves without difficulty that they were neither equipped for a long war nor in a position to fight a big monarchy like Austria. The idea ate into the heart like a canker. The previous successes of the Serbian Army had been due to a patriotism and *élan* which counted for far more than military discipline; but now, the one had become broken and the other enfeebled, and retreat upon retreat, combined with the sufferings incidental to unsuccessful operations in such a country, had spread a wave of dire depression throughout the rank and file. Even the transport oxen were affected. Of the starved, sullen brutes which made up the convoys, half were lame and the rest utterly worn out. Small wonder, then, that preparations were made to abandon Kragouyevatz and retire on Parachin. The hills beyond the citadel were entrenched for the purpose of a rear-guard action, the dismantling of the arsenal commenced, the hospitals were evacuated, and those civilians possessed of the necessary means of locomotion quickly made good their escape to safer spheres.

Little news reached the outside world from Serbia during those dark days, for it was nowhere customary to report defeat. In the event of an unusually great disaster, war correspondents were permitted to draw attention to a "strategic retirement" or a "straightening of the line"; but that was all. Yet the public learned from Vienna and Sofia that the gallant Serbs were broken. In the German and Austrian capitals clanging bells mingled with the rejoicings of the delirious enemy Press, while the Bulgarian newspapers, self-assured of a Habsburg victory, intermixed their pæans with schemes for the division of Macedonia between themselves and the Dual Monarchy. In official circles, however, the menace was fully appreciated, and the Entente Powers went so far as to invite Greece to step in to the assistance of her Ally. M. Venizelos refused, on the ground that such an action would have exposed Greece to a flank attack

from Bulgaria and jeopardised the communications of both Greece and Serbia with Salonika. Nothing was left, therefore, but to await the development of events, and it is not too much to assert that the entire world looked for a speedy *finale* to Serbia's struggle.

Despite the apparent hopelessness of it all, there remained deep down in the heart of the Serbian leaders a conviction that the decisive engagement had yet to be won. Through the darkness of defeat there had shone occasional gleams of encouragement. Day after day, Colonel Pavlovitch,¹ the brilliant Director of Military Operations on the General Staff, had analysed the statements of the captured Austrians, and from these, coupled with the slowness of the enemy advance, he concluded that serious difficulties of transport were being encountered and that the demoralisation in the ranks of General Potiorek's Army was no less marked than in his own. Further, small consignments of ammunition were at last arriving from Russia and further stocks were *en route* from France. It was in connection with this much-needed support that Bulgaria struck her first overt blow on behalf of the Central Powers. The Russian contribution was brought down to the Danube to the mouth of the Timok River, whence ran a narrow-gauge railway to Nish. The Tzar's ships were fired upon from the Bulgarian shore on their journey up the river, and an unsuccessful attempt

¹ Colonel Jivko Pavlovitch was born in 1871. The son of a Serbian peasant, he early developed a passion for the Army, but, by reason of the poverty of his parents, was unable to attach himself to his chosen career until, by his extraordinary ability, he won a series of scholarships. After a period of study in the Military Academy at Beograd, he finished his instruction at Berlin, and was then admitted to the Serbian General Staff. He soon rose to the position of Professor of Tactics at the Serbian Military School, and, when war was declared against Turkey, was the obvious choice for the position of Director of Military Operations. He visited London in the spring of 1913 as military expert attached to the Serbian Delegation, and later proceeded to Scutari, where he was in charge of the joint Serbo-Montenegrin attack against that town. During the Bulgarian War of 1913, Colonel Pavlovitch was a principal collaborator of Marshal Poutnik, and the same rôle was allocated to him in the war against Austria. He possessed the well-developed physique of the average Serbian, tremendous powers of resistance, and rarely lost his innate optimism.

was subsequently made by armed Bulgarian bands to blow up a tunnel near Zaïtchar. Both efforts failed. The port of entry for the French shells was Salonika, and thence they had to be transported up the railway running through Macedonia along the Vardar River. Here a band of Bulgarian irregulars, armed with maxim-guns, invaded Serbian territory, slaughtered the Serbian railway guard, blew up one of the bridges over the river, and burned its wooden pillars. Happily, some trains were already across, but the others were delayed for over a week by this exploit and a signal service, the importance of which can only be realised when the existing situation in Serbia is taken into consideration, was rendered to Austrian arms.

Once the arrival of munitions removed the principal cause of the retreat, it became necessary at all costs to restore the morale of the soldiers, and this was only to be accomplished by a vigorous counter-offensive. Thus the Serbian Staff set about the organisation of one last bold bid for victory, and, on December 2nd, Marshal Poutnik ordered that on the following day the three Serbian Armies, together with the Ouzhitse Army, should energetically attack the enemy on the entire front. Detailed instructions were given in a comprehensive *ordre du jour*, of which we quote a summary :

“From the declarations of prisoners and refugees it is clear that the enemy is in a difficult position both so far as concerns the *ravitaillement* and the physical condition of his troops. In order to restore the morale of our soldiers, I order the three Armies, as well as the Ouzhitse Army (on the left bank of the Western Morava), energetically to attack the enemy on the respective fronts and oblige him to retreat.

“The troops of the ‘Detachment of Beograd’ will remain on their positions with the obligation to assure the right flank and the rear of the 2nd Army. So far as concerns the commencement of the attack itself, the liaison between the armies, and the assistance to be rendered the one to the other, I order the Commandants to consult together.

Second Army

"All three divisions will to-morrow attack the enemy on their fronts and force him to retreat, in making the necessary efforts to retake their previous positions and chase the enemy in headlong flight across the Koloubara.

Third Army

"The Drina II Division will attack Kik and then advance on Gal. It will be assisted by the Combined Division during the attack against Tchiker (292).

"The Combined Division will attack the front Tchiker (292)-Kamal and then advance in the direction Parlog Liplyé.

First Army

"The Drina I Division will advance towards the front : village Rouchitch-village Kriva reka. The detachment of Relinats, with the battalion at Goloubats, will protect the flank of the division and advance towards the front : Ougrinovtsi-Goloubatz in contact with the Timok II Division, 3rd Army.

"The Morava II Division will advance towards the front : village Rouchitch-village Ozrene.

"The Danube I Division will advance towards the front : village Ozrene-village Lozagn.

"The Danube II Division will advance towards the front : village Lozagn (right bank of the Ditchina reka) —village Bresna, direction of Bagnani and Teotchin.

"The delivery of the attack will, as far as possible, be preceded by artillery preparation. I recommend, above all, that the greatest cohesion and energy shall be observed, and that a close liaison shall be maintained with neighbouring detachments. Negligence in affording assistance to neighbouring detachments, always provided that same is necessary and possible, will be considered a crime and an act of treachery.

Ouzhitse Army

"The Shoumadia II Division (less one battalion and two machine-guns) will pronounce an energetic attack

against Pragnani and Goyna gora, the while its right flank advances by the village Léoushitch and in touch with the left wing of the 1st Army. From its positions Rouyevitza (583) 416-370 it will continue its advance towards Orlovatcha and Babina Glava in sympathy with the action of the 1st Army.

"The right and centre of the Detachment of Lym will attack energetically on the sector river Louzhnitsa-river Vrantchanska via Breziak towards the front Shilvokitza-Kreménié. Its left wing will hold its positions in order to protect the defile.

"The Brigade of Ouzhitse will maintain its positions.

"The attack by the Ouzhitse Army will commence at 7 a.m. without fail."

At the time of issuing the above orders the Serbian forces (exclusive of the troops defending the north-eastern frontier, which remained at their posts) held the under-mentioned line :

Detachment of Beograd (2 bodies of massed troops):

Varovnitza-Malowanie (520), Mishlyenatz (312), Rogatcha brdo (271), Orzitze (281).

2nd Army (4 divisions: Independent Cavalry Division):

Sibnitza - Okresak - Strmovo-Ravagn (318) - Medvedniak (365), Vagan (490), Gareshkabara (446 and 423).

3rd Army (3 divisions):

Mramor (398), Kalanyevtsi-Strazha (352), Boboshka (204), Gorni brdo (489), Krnya Yela (520), Motika (603).

1st Army (4 divisions):

Nakoutchani - Vrantchani-Sinoshevtsi - Vaskova Glavitza - Galitch (703). Fronting north-west before Gorni Milanovatz.

Ouzhitse Army (1 division: 2 bodies of massed brigades):

Kita - Yanchitchi - Kablar - Ovtchar - Markovitza. Defending the Western Morava Valley.

The corresponding distribution of the Austrian Army Corps was as follows :

Left wing: (8th and Combined Army Corps):

In the act of swinging from the front Obrenovatz-Lazarevatz in the direction of Beograd-Mladenovatz.

Centre (13th Army Corps):

Arapovatz - Baroshevatz - Trboushmitza - Braïkovatz-Parlog (248), Liplye.

Right wing (15th and 16th Mountain Corps):

Vrlaya - Lipet - Goloubatz (496) — Bolkovatz - Ozrene - Leoushitch-Rouyevitza (583)—Godoun (711)—Pozhega-Arilye.

Thus the enemy right wing, occupying the main ridge of the watershed between the Koloubara and Western Morava rivers (Malyen-Souvobor), lay just at the entrance to the valley of the Western Morava ; his centre was in front of the mountain region of Roudnik ; and his left was engaged in crossing to the right bank of the Koloubara.

Up to this point the strategy of the Austrian Staff had been planned on broadly conceived lines, and was within reasonable distance of successful execution. Employing Souvobor as a pivot, and with their right wing holding a very strong position on Malyen and their left wing firmly established south of Beograd (Koviona-Kraikova bara), they were attempting to swing their right in the direction of Tchatchak and Gorni Milanovatz, and their left down the Morava River through Mladenovatz. This plan, carried to fruition, would have rendered untenable the heights of Roudnik, held by the 2nd and 3rd Armies, and enabled them to round up the mass of the Serbian forces together with Kragouyevatz and its arsenal, after which the capture of Nish (the temporary capital) would have followed as a matter of course and the campaign in Serbia would have been at an end.

But the manœuvre, although laudable enough from a strategic point of view, was fraught with certain disadvantages. It involved an extension of the Austrian front and a consequent weakening of the centre, and though the enemy's right wing was composed of his finest units and had shown such vigour in its offensive that it had already reached the entrance to the Western Morava Valley, it had been pushed up a long way from its base and was served by very inferior communications. These considerations were, however, offset by the fact that a Serbian revival was, under the circumstances, highly improbable, and General Potiorek doubtless considered it justifiable to prosecute the attack on Gorni Milanovatz with his reduced but exceedingly mobile columns. As events fell out, the conception proved to be a little too grandiose for the troops at the Austrian Commander's disposal ; his strategy was never allowed to develop, and it was precisely at that period when the Austrian left was being strengthened and translated to

the right bank of the Koloubara, that Marshal Poutnik let loose his great counter-attack.

The Serbian plan, which was put into operation at this psychological moment, was elaborated with the object primarily of piercing the enemy's centre and then falling upon and crushing the separate parts of his army in detail. If we examine the situation on the whole front, it becomes obvious that the chief burden of the offensive fell upon the Serbian left centre and left (the 1st and Ouzhitse), the only evidence of activity in the north at this time being provided by hostile cavalry patrols, which had been observed crossing to the right bank of the river Ralya in movement through the villages of Slatina, Stoinik, Babe, and Sopot, and which involved an insignificant engagement on the left wing of the Detachment of Beograd, then engaged in supporting the home cavalry in an attack on Slatina. On their part, the 2nd and 3rd Armies, by reason of the ground before them, were in a comparatively favourable position. The task which lay before the Ouzhitse and 1st Armies was much more difficult. The rôle of the former, posted as it was on the extreme left of the line, was one of vital importance. Its mission was to protect the flank of the 1st Army, and failure in the allotted task might have turned the success of that unit into irretrievable disaster. It was an essential of the Austrian scheme to obtain control of the Western Morava Valley, for which reason, despite all the obstacles provided by the terrain, the massing of hostile mountain brigades on this front continued without interruption. This fact, added to the activity of reconnoitring parties composed of enemy officers, the declarations of prisoners, and the appearance of an unusual number of aeroplanes overhead, combined to indicate that a renewal of the Austrian offensive was imminent.

The entire success of the projected Serbian counter-attack hinged upon the ability of the 1st Army to reach the main watershed of the Koloubara and Western Morava Rivers (the line Malyen-Souvobor-Prostrouga), and, though there is no desire to minimise the importance of the superb and invaluable part played by the other Serbian Armies, and particularly by the 2nd Army, which fought

with magnificent tenacity through defeat and victory alike, it must be acknowledged that General Mishitch's men occupied the most spectacular position in the new phase of the battle. They had been the most demoralised and had led the retirement, often bringing back the wings in their train, and they now reversed the old order of things and took the lead in the extraordinary incidents which supply the most important and brilliant pages in Serbian military history to date. By this time the four divisions of this army mustered no more than 22,000 bayonets; but the several days' rest that had been permitted them by the enemy, coupled with the fact that artillery ammunition had commenced to arrive, served to improve the morale of the troops, and, physically rested and encouraged by a stirring message from King Peter,¹ the sense of demoralisation and hopelessness left them, and in place of indiscipline, feebleness, and apathy, there set in a renewed love of country, an *élan*, and a spirit of self-sacrifice which had been temporarily damped down by the recent sufferings, losses, and withdrawals.

There can be little doubt that, after the feeble resistance previously encountered, the sudden fury of the counter-attack took the Austrians completely by surprise. They appeared to have been so absorbed by the success which had thus far crowned their progress, so sure and accustomed to victory, so confident of a triumphal march forward, that they neglected the most elementary precautions for their security. On the morning of December 3rd they came out slowly on the line Ougrinovtsi-Kriva reka-D. Branetitch-Radyicha brdo-Leoushitch, and, leaving their heavy artillery in the rear, descended from the highlands and dawdled on, protected only by mountain batteries stationed in the directions of Batchinatz-Souvobor-Goukoshi-Bolkovatz. Thus, when

¹ "His Majesty, the King, admiring the superhuman efforts and piously saluting the memory of those who have already fallen, conveys to all officers, non-commissioned officers and men the expression of his most sincere thanks, and is firmly convinced that they will persist, with that tenacity which has obtained world-wide recognition, in the fight for the defence of the Fatherland, national honour and glory, and for the future of Serbia, even at the cost of the supreme sacrifice."

General Mishitch led his 1st Army towards Souvobor, he caught his enemy trundling leisurely along the roads—not in open country, but in valleys and dales commanded from the heights above, and, before they could recover from the shock and extend their ranks, the Serbs had inflicted considerable losses upon them, and thrown the survivors into a state of semi-panic. By 9 a.m. an advance on the whole front had been registered and 3 officers, 405 men, 4 mountain howitzers, and a quantity of other material captured. The Austrian resistance stiffened a little, and the battle grew more sanguinary as it proceeded, but by nightfall the 1st Army had advanced to the line Koshtouniche-Teochin-Gorni Branetitch-Vranovitza, and secured a total bag of 12 officers, 1,500 men, 5 mountain howitzers, and 4 machine-guns, in addition to inflicting heavy casualties. The general direction of the forward movement was Souvobor-Prostrouga.

The Ouzhitse Army was able to push its right wing forward to the line 870-Godoun (711) before it was held up by enemy counter-attacks; but, meeting with strong opposition, was unable to do more than hold its ground on the left. To the north of the 1st Army, the 3rd Army found itself subjected to a strong offensive from the Austrian 13th Corps from the positions of Braikovatz-Tchiker 292-Kamal. A turning movement was, however, directed against the hostile right wing with such success that the Combined Division eventually established itself on Kamal, seized a portion of the heights of Vrlaya, and threatened the Habsburg rear. The Serbian right held firm against the hostile onslaught, the centre made important progress, and by nightfall the army occupied the line Kretchanatz-Kamal-Vrlaya, whence was opened, at 10.30 p.m., an attack against the enemy front on Braikovatz-Tchiker-Okrouglo Polye—an operation designed to throw the Austrians back on the river Lyg in the sector held by the 3rd Army.

The 2nd Army was confronted only by a moderate part of the strength of the hostile 8th and Combined Army Corps. Marshal Stepanovitch's present object was to move westward in the direction of the Koloubara, and his chief attention was focused on the possession of the

key positions of Baroshevatz (271), Bistritza Vis (295), and the heights of Kremenitza, which dominated Lazarevatz itself along the three converging roads. Since Lazarevatz was the pivot of the two Austrian fronts as well as the railhead for the supplies—which were being brought up from Valyevo—it was obvious that its possession would be hotly disputed. On the Serbian side, the Morava I Division advanced against the Kremenitza range in two columns, and, during the day, succeeded in capturing the outlying defences on Shtaratch (379) and Balin Grob (329) respectively. From these positions they deployed for the attack. Timok I surprised the enemy, and, after a short but strenuous onslaught, secured the heights of Bistritza Vis (295) and Ivkovatcha (271), while the Shoumadia I drove in the opposition and halted for the night at Zmiyane and on the front Kapar (261)-Okresak. On its part the Independent Cavalry Division, advancing generally by the valley of the Touria, had swept the Austrians back to the line Tchamske-Nyive (253)-Slatina.

The signal successes of the first day's offensive, coming, as they did, hard upon weeks of discouraging bulletins, were hailed with enthusiasm by the Serbs. Yet their jubilation was quiet and restrained. They recognised that their adversary had been taken unawares, and they did not lose sight of the fact that he remained in possession of mountain fastnesses of great natural strength, from many of which he would have to be driven at the point of the bayonet. But the men had regained confidence in their officers and themselves, got back into their old victorious stride, and, pressing onward with renewed courage, they stormed and captured tor after tor, and swept the Habsburg Armies before them with ever-increasing rapidity.

December 4th

The task before the 1st Army this day was one of particular difficulty. The terrain was very accidental—a succession of ever-heightening ranges—and the advantages were all with the defence. The chief requirement of successful offence lay in relentless pursuit, and to

such an extent did this principle govern General Mishitch's orders, that the Austrians were never given time to recover from their surprise of the first day's drive. Up hill and down dale, across forbidding tors and through flooded ravines, they were pursued by the Serbs, who swept over all obstacles and gallantly approached the formidable natural fortress of Central Serbia before nightfall.

The enemy were now observed to be evacuating Prostrouga in haste, and the advance could have been prosecuted to further advantage towards that summit and Souvobor, had the Serbs not been kept back by the Ouzhitse Army, which with difficulty stood its ground under the terrific counter-attacks delivered by the Austrian 16th Corps in an attempt to retrieve the catastrophe which had overwhelmed the enemy centre.

The 3rd Army was also checked somewhat by the Austrian resistance, but certain progress was registered, and the Vrlaya range was occupied with the exception of its highest point. The enemy pulled up on the line Kik-Tchiker-V. Lipet-Polyanitza-western slopes of Vrlaya.

Concerning the 2nd Army there was little of note to report. The Kremenitza range presented a very formidable obstacle to the advance towards Lazarevatz, and all the attacks by the Morava Division broke down before a stubborn defence offered by six regiments of infantry and a heavy complement of artillery. The men of the Timok were likewise held up. The right column of the Shoumadia failed to reach Arapovatz, but the left wing, finding hill 187 strongly fortified, carefully prepared for the attack during the greater part of the day, and, proceeding to the assault at 4 p.m., captured it and 600 prisoners as a result of fierce hand-to-hand fighting. The Cavalry Division made additional progress up the Touria Valley, while strong hostile forces, approaching from the north, came into contact with the Detachment of Beograd.

The last-mentioned development was occasioned by the fact that, with a view to threatening the Serbian flank and assisting their own troops across the Koloubara and Lyg rivers to maintain their ground, the Austrians expedited the advance of their 8th and Combined Army

Corps towards Mladenovatz. Hence the severe combats which were soon engaged around Varovnitza-Kosmaï-Sibnitza. The Serbian forces of the Beograd Detachment stationed there were of poor quality—mostly men of the 3rd Ban—but they acquitted themselves valiantly and thus rendered possible the continuation of the offensive in the direction of Valyevo. In this connection it may be advisable to add that, if the decision of the Serbian Staff to evacuate Beograd stood in need of any additional justification, the same was provided by the fact that the subsequent failure of the Austrian effort to outflank Kragouyevatz from the north, was precisely due to the determined resistance of the troops who had been withdrawn from the defence of the capital.

December 5th

During the course of the following day the Austrian turning movement against the northern front of the Serbs developed into a serious menace. Increasingly heavy hostile forces were massed between Beograd and Lazarevatz, and, after the Timok Division had captured Dren and occupied the line Ivkovatcha (271)-Dren (278), it was ordered to proceed to Rogatcha and place itself at the disposition of the Detachment of Beograd. Its abandoned front was taken over by elements from the Morava and Shoumadia Divisions.

Meantime, Morava I proceeded with the attack on the Kremenitza range. Though the enemy defended desperately with a force which had been increased to 8 regiments and 4 groups of artillery, he was thrown off all the summits save hill 371, suffering heavy losses in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The hesitation and lack of decision displayed by the Austrian Command at this juncture suggested that this result was somewhat unexpected, for, although obvious preparations for a counter-attack were observed, the threat failed to materialise, and the Serbian movement towards the Koloubara River was continued with little interruption. An assault undertaken by the right wing of the Shoumadia against hill 212 yielded no result save a bag of 200 prisoners and a couple of moun-

tain-guns ; but the left wing progressed as far as hill 173, and effected liaison with the Timok near Zeoke. The 2nd Army was, therefore, slowly converging on Lazarevatz on a front running almost north to south, the Austrians being in force at Volouyak (175), around Lazarevatz and on the Kremenitza.

While the 3rd Army continued to hold Tchiker and the rest of its front against repeated enemy assaults, the 1st Army went forward during the day with such vigour that the troops obtained complete mastery of the coveted positions of Prostrouga-Rayatz-Souvorob-Babina Glava, whence they looked down upon their harried foes in full flight along every road and bridle-path that led to the Goukoshi-Rouda-Malyen line. The country was now littered with the impedimenta discarded by the retreating Austrians, and prisoners were being brought in in droves. Moreover, the strategical object of the General Staff had been carried to successful execution. With their centre pierced and the principal crest in Serbian hands, the Habsburgers had lost a powerful *point d'appui* for their action, and their forces in the Koloubara and Western Morava Valley, thus separated one from another by a victorious Serbian army, could no longer render mutual assistance.

On its part, the Ouzhitse Army was engaged in heavy fighting on both banks of the Western Morava, and, despite a gallant resistance to superior numbers, ground was given at some points. In view of the general situation, however, such local set-backs were no longer fraught with danger, and, on the other hand, it was obvious that even a partial success would throw the Austrians into full retreat. This desired advantage was obtained later in the day by a brilliant action by the Brigade of Ouzhitse on Mount Krstats, and, under the influence of this tactical victory, the whole of the hostile forces commenced to retire.

December 6th

There was now little doubt that the Third Austrian Invasion of Serbia would prove an even greater *débâcle*

than the first. The Austrian centre and right had been completely broken, and were retreating in disordered flight towards Valyevo and Rogachitza, ceding thousands of prisoners and abandoning enormous quantities of impedimenta of war. It was only on the northern front that any danger threatened the Serbs; but, in order to render the account of the subsequent operations more intelligible to the reader, it will be advisable to leave further consideration of the happenings in that sector until we have completed the story of the pursuit across the Koloubara and towards the Drina frontier.

The Austrian right had been badly cut up during the struggle on Mount Krstats, and, having followed up the victory by a night attack, the Ouzhitse Army on December 6th succeeded in regaining possession of Goyna Gora and Zeleni breg. Before the 1st Army, all evidence of organised resistance had now disappeared, and the battle degenerated into a mere chase of the enemy along the muddled roads, up and down the mountains, and in and out of the ravines which dissected the country-side. Entire battalions were rounded up and sent to the rear in charge of a couple of 3rd Ban soldiers; the capture of cannon and material became so commonplace that General Mishitch ceased even to collect or report his booty, and left it lying where it had been abandoned, with the exception of some batteries which, discovered in favourable situations, were swung round and turned against their owners. By night-fall the last remaining chain of fortresses (Malyen-Rouda-705-Mednik-Goukoshi) was in Serbian hands, and the Austrians, having now no thought save for their personal safety, were hurrying across the descending plain towards Valyevo.

The effect of the rout was not lost upon the enemy holding the front before the 3rd Army, and, once the pressure was relieved, General Yourishitch's divisions took up the pursuit with *élan*. Lipet was early taken, to be followed shortly afterwards by the capitulation of Tchiker. Despite the loss of this point of vantage, however, the Austrians on the sector of the Kremenitza range still occupied by them stood firm, and, in order to break down this obstacle to the capture of Lazarevatz, the Drina II

Division (3rd Army) was deployed on the left of the position.

December 7th

The pursuit continued relentlessly throughout the day. The Ouzhitse Army was following on the heels of its adversary on the sector Razhana-Kosyeritch-Ouzhitse. The men of the 1st Army, now seemingly living on victory, left their supply columns far in the rear, and, rushing forward on every hand in search of their prey, succeeded in isolating large bodies of hostile troops by cutting the communication between Goukoshi-Mionitza and Malyen-Valyevo. The 3rd Army cleared the enemy out of their holding on the right of the Koloubara, and, after a stubborn fight, Kremenitza fell entirely into Serbian hands. Had the 2nd Army now been free to devote its energies to the recapture of Lazarevatz, that important town would likewise have fallen speedily ; but, as we shall afterwards observe, the critical events in the northern theatre had called thither the bulk of the forces at Marshal Stepanovitch's disposal.

December 8th

On December 8th the two pursuing armies arrived before Ouzhitse and Valyevo respectively, where it was to be expected that a stand would be made. Ample time had been available for the garrisons to prepare additional defensive works, and, being fresh and comparatively unaffected by the rout, they were able to restore to some extent the broken discipline of the fugitives. The Ouzhitse Army met with considerable opposition before the town of that name. Nevertheless, the Serbs were not to be denied, and the remnants of the famous Austrian 16th Army Corps soon turned tail and fled for the frontier. At Valyevo the approaches had been entrenched and guns were in position, but the inconsiderate Serbian General deployed his troops round the hills, with the result that the Austrians were taken as completely by surprise as if they had never heard of their coming. While their main force hurried on through the town towards Loznitza

and Shabatz, a rear-guard of Hungarians on the slopes to the north-west put up an indifferent fight before they, too, fled in disorder. The last of them were caught in a Serbian barrage fire, and on the rising ground a hundred or more lay stretched out on the ground, shot down as they ran. A few, severely wounded, sat nursing their sores, amid their dead comrades, tended only by a little Serbian lad who fetched water to soothe their raging thirst.

On the western front the battle was now virtually over. All that General Potiorek had to show for his cherished decoration was the spectacle of the remnants of three magnificent Army Corps of the Habsburg Empire fleeing for their lives before the tattered and despised Serbian peasantry. Now split up into divers columns, they sped homeward, without thought or inclination for rearguard actions, yielding prisoners *en masse*, and shedding cannon and other costly prizes with less compunction than the crew of a sinking ship jettison mobile deadweight. By December 10th the Ouzhitse Army had seen the last of its foes over the Drina, and three days later the 1st Army reoccupied the lower reaches of the Drina and the Sava from Loznitza to Shabatz, all the Austrians who were not casualties having been ejected from Serbian territory.

Some idea of the remarkable achievement of King Peter's Army may be gleaned from the consideration that, though it had taken the Habsburgers four weeks to advance from the Drina to the line from which Marshal Poutnik launched his great counter-attack, it took them only ten days to retrace their steps. Commencing with a tremendous superiority in men and guns, their advantage had steadily increased, for while their own effectives were, for the most part, repeatedly brought up to strength by drafts, the Serbs had no surplus with which to make good their heavy losses. They possessed no strategic reserves, and, when reinforcements were required, these were perforce supplied by the borrowing of a battalion from some other division, with a consequent weakening of that part of the line. When the second phase of the

battle commenced (December 3rd), the effectives of the Serbian Armies had been reduced to little more than 100,000 bayonets, and, as we shall subsequently record, they inflicted approximately 100,000 casualties (killed, wounded, and prisoners) upon their enemy, in addition to capturing an almost uncountable mass of booty.

The author has striven to make this history a general recital of events rather than a narrative of personal impressions, but the following brief extract from his despatches forwarded to the *Times* at the conclusion of the "Battle of the Koloubara" will, perhaps, assist the reader to obtain a truer perspective of the Austrian rout, particularly if it is read in conjunction with the preceding pages :

"The road to Souvobor follows a pleasant enough valley, now winding and twisting round cliff or crag, now striding some half-dry waterway over a crude bridge, and again bisecting a little village that seems all church and coffee-shop. Then, as we left the low foothills and were pushed up the ever-rising slopes of the range, we topped a domineering ledge and entered the battle-field.

"Here was the aftermath of war. Deep-dug trenches, fields spitted with gaping holes bored by falling shells that had shot the earth up fountain-like, broken rifles, bits of clothing, knapsacks, and still unburied corpses. Ploughed land and stubble that had been flattened by thousands of warring feet as the tide of victory ebbed and flowed; well-worked Serbian earthworks in the rear, and then little mounds thrown up by the advancing infantry as they crept onwards to the enemy. Then the signs of the final rush that sent the Austrians headlong towards Valjevo.

"It had been no sudden flight, this retreat from Souvobor. Rather had the wave of disaster risen in a crescendo from a small beginning until it reached the dimensions of *débâcle*. At first there had been time and to spare, for the early prizes consisted of mountain howitzers placed in almost inaccessible positions and limbers from which the guns had been lifted at no little pain and carefully buried. We saw them there, neatly interred on the mountain-side in graves surmounted, like those of fallen

warriors, with a wooden cross, the better to conceal their hiding.

“Farther along were heavy siege-guns left by the roadside, their breech-blocks removed, and every accessory easily transportable carried off. Thus early the retreat was difficult to understand. The Austrians had held well-entrenched positions of undoubted military value. Line after line of rising crests, each commanding the other, all with an excellent field of fire over the country before them, had been held and well fortified. The approaches were always of the most arduous. Yet, more and more impetuously as the battle progressed, these strongholds had been successively abandoned, until, shortly after the Lyg and the little village of Goukoshi were left behind, the real, live, panic-stricken rout commenced.

“One might as well seek to paint the lily as to describe the scene. Take the tableau near Gorni Toplitza, where the road winds round a commanding promontory which overhangs the valley. Right on the edge of the cliff, protected by a copse of prune-trees, the Austrians had placed a battery of field-guns, while in the road were placed a score of ammunition-wagons, from which the guns were served by crude little two-wheeled carts. Deploying on the flank of this position, the Serbian gunners had covered it with a terrible enfilading fire, and men, horses, carts, wagons, lay in a tangled heap upon the ground. There were dead horses in the shafts of the carts with dead men’s hands still clutching the bridles—all shot down by a veritable torrent of shell. Some few had tried to escape, and as they ran they jettisoned caps, cartridges, and haversacks, only to meet death themselves ere they could reach the shelter of a neighbouring ravine. It was a pathetic, moving picture of bewildered flight.

“Thereafter the Austrians had but one thought—to get outside the range of Serbian guns. Everything was cast off. Cannon were left perfect and uninjured; maxims abandoned in the trenches; accoutrements of every description fairly littered the road. Some ammunition-wagons were left fully charged; from others the live

shell had been pitched out upon the roadway to lighten the load until, with the increasing pressure of the pursuit, the vehicles themselves had been left behind. Jumbled up with this mass of artillery were countless transport wagons and innumerable field-ovens. Horses, fallen by the roadside, were left to die if injured, shot if they had but succumbed to fatigue.

“Wounded warriors were abandoned to their fate; dead soldiers uncountable left to add a touch of blue-grey colour to the mass of dark-green carriages. There were rifles by the thousand, dropped by their flying owners. Most were whole, others splintered by shot or broken in some of the fierce hand-to-hand fighting that preceded the rout. Ammunition littered the route like the coloured tissues of a paper-chase; sometimes in batches where it had been tipped out of the wagons, and again sprinkled over the earth as the fugitives had emptied their belts to ease the burden by a few ounces.

“Thus for mile upon mile. At every few yards, some discarded trophy; in every ditch, gun or rifle ammunition; and towards the end the gunners had cut the traces of their teams and fled onwards with the horses. There were few dead to be seen now, for the Austrians no longer stayed to fight. Nothing seemingly mattered save to put a distance between themselves and the pursuing Serbians.

“All along this highway of tragedy we had jostled two streams of hapless sufferers. Going in our own direction were columns of refugees, their oxen in divers stages of life and death, yoked up to every conceivable manner of springless wagon piled high with the few odds and ends of furniture and bedding which they had snatched up when they had fled before the Austrian advance. Atop the bundles lay starving and sick children, wan with want and exposure; by the side of the conveyance, urging the emaciated cattle along with weird cries and curses, walked sore-footed and weary women-folk returning to the devastated remains of what were once their homes.

“Crossing us came a continuous procession of Austrian prisoners. Now and again there would be a thousand or more marching along in charge of a couple of Serbians.

They were men of every age, and of every race which that hotch-potch of nationalities called Austria-Hungary can provide—recruits, common army, the Landwehr and the Landsturm ; Austrians, Hungarians, Mussulmans, Serbs, Czechs, Moravians, Slovenes, Rumanians, Russians, etc. A sorry enough crowd, and of them all I liked best the Bosnian Mussulmans.

“ In between the convoys men straggled who had fallen out by the way. Weary, pain-stricken souls, these, who groaned and panted as they staggered along with the aid of a supporting stick hewn from roadside tree. Many of them, footsore, had slung their boots across their shoulders and walked with feet enwrapped in rags of sackcloth. And ever and anon we passed some blue-grey soldier stretched out by the way, awaiting death, alone and unbefriended.

“ For almost two months until November 11th, when I had to flee with the Headquarters Staff, Valjevo had been the centre of my wanderings, and it was pleasant to retread its cobbled streets. The town had, however, a strange and deserted appearance. Crowds of Austrians and but a handful of Serbs gave it the air of still being under enemy occupation. Save for one barracks and two houses burned, the place was outwardly intact, and the few inhabitants who had remained had not been molested. But never were external impressions more misleading, for every unoccupied house had been pillaged from floor to ceiling. Room after room had been ransacked, everything of value pilfered, and pictures of the Serbian royal family defaced.

“ What surprised one most, however, was the state of indescribable filth which these people left behind them, and in which they had obviously lived. The bedrooms which had been occupied by officers and men alike were positively pestilential. Worse, indeed, were the hospitals. Three thousand Austrian wounded had been left in the charge of thirteen doctors with ambulance staffs, and yet the men were lying anywhere and anyhow on handfuls of hay, suffering and dying in a condition of appalling filth. It cannot be suggested that Austrian doctors knew no better ; but this experience, taken with the many

other evidences of indifference to the well-being of the troops which I have observed of late, forces me to the conclusion that, in the eyes of his superiors, the Austrian soldier ceases to be worthy of consideration the moment he is put indefinitely out of action. He is just 'cannon-fodder,' as the Prussian has it."

THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST BEOGRAD

From December 6th onwards, military interest centred principally in the events which were being enacted on the northern front. Attention has already been drawn to the fact that the Austrian 8th and Combined Army Corps were observed to be working round against the line Lazarevatz-Varovnitza, and, when at length they were ejected from the former town, they maintained the same direction by withdrawing the bulk of their forces thence on to the fortified height of Volouyak. The obvious strategical object of this redistribution of the two army corps was to turn the two key positions of Kosmaï and Varovnitza and proceed down the Morava Valley via Mladenovatz, and thus to outflank the whole Serbian offensive. In this theatre the enemy were well served in the matter of supplies, for they had the trunk line and the roads from Beograd at their disposal, and every indication pointed to their making a desperate bid for victory in order to retrieve defeat elsewhere.

The Austrians were here under the command of General Franck, and daybreak of December 6th found them well entrenched on the whole front, whence they proceeded immediately to the attack, the most violent onslaught being directed against the extreme right (Varovnitza). This wing was forthwith strengthened by the introduction of the reserves of the Detachment of Beograd; but the reinforcement proved insufficient to secure the situation, which soon became so precarious that the Timok I Division was taken out of the 2nd Army and despatched by forced march to Kosmaï, reaching the mountain in the evening. Fighting of a very severe nature took place during the ensuing day, and, though numerous hostile assaults were beaten off, often with considerable

difficulty and heavy loss, the enemy succeeded in occupying the positions of 335-Maïdan.

On December 8th the onslaught continued with unabated fury, more especially against Kosmaï, and, as the whole issue hung upon an effective resistance being offered on this front, still further units were transferred thither from the 2nd Army. Despite this added weight of man-power, however, the enemy breached the line by a successful attack on Malovagn (520) (protecting Kosmaï), and a little later the great mountain itself yielded to pressure and passed into Austrian hands. For a few hours the fate of the Serbian victory hung in the balance, and the consequences of the set-back might have been disastrous had not some troops of the Detachment of Obrenovatz come up in the nick of time on to Rogatcha brdo (297), whence they poured a heavy fire on to the attacking forces and checked their progress. This relief enabled the Serbs to re-form, and, under the protection of artillery on Koshoutitza (465), General Jivkovitch (commanding the Detachment of Beograd) opened a counter-attack. The two adversaries fought fiercely. The Austrians defended their prize with great stubbornness, and neither side was able to register progress until, at a critical moment in the conflict, a Serbian detachment emerged from the valley of the stream Kosse-line. This deployment divided the attention of the Austrians, with the result that at 3 p.m. Malovagn was stormed and retaken. A hostile counter-attack, undertaken half an hour later, failed in its purpose, and by 4 p.m. the two summits of Malovagn (520) and Kosmaï were safe once more in Serbian hands. At nightfall the line occupied ran: Breliotehevatz (332)-Malovagn-Kosmaï-Varovnitza. The battle proceeded throughout the night on the Varovnitza sector, where, despite periods of crisis, the Serbians stood firm and inflicted heavy losses upon their adversaries.

While these events were proceeding, the territory lying west of the Koloubara had been practically cleared of the invaders—a culmination which enabled General Headquarters to give practically undivided attention to the problem provided by the activity of the enemy

in the north, the object being thoroughly to crush the Austrian forces before they could receive material reinforcements and entrench and fortify themselves on their already strong positions. The main Serbian offensive was, therefore, now changed from a north-westerly to a due northerly direction (*i.e.* towards Beograd) and there commenced a concentration of the 2nd and 3rd Serbian Armies with the Detachment of Beograd with a view to enveloping the enemy and exerting all possible pressure in an advance upon the capital. The left flank of the armies was covered by a division which remained at Obrenovatz, and the operations were placed under the high command of Marshal Stepanovitch.

At this stage of the battle the Cavalry Division held the left bank of the Belashnitzza River; the weakened 2nd Army was on the line Volouyak-Sibnitzza-Nemenikouche; the reinforced Detachment of Beograd maintained the positions Kosmaï-Varovnitza, and the Detachment of Branitchevo had come up and occupied Poudartsi. The troops thus held a semicircular front stretching almost from the Sava to the Danube rivers. On their part, the Austrian main positions ran from a point to the east of Obrenovatz up the right bank of the Koloubara River to Konatitza, and then across to Grodska through Borak-Bozhdarevatz-Vlashka-Lypa-Kraikovabara.

From this base the enemy offensive continued with unabated vigour on December 9th against the whole Serbian front, but in particular before Malovagn, Varovnitza, and Mouynitza, where the struggle proceeded throughout the day with great ferocity, for both sides realised that the final issue of the Third Invasion was at stake. The nature of the terrain prohibited operations on a bold scale, so that the adversaries were often found fighting hand-to-hand combats in isolated bodies; but, though no spectacular progress was registered, the Serbs eventually secured the supremacy in a critical battle which really decided the fate of the Austrian attempt to reach Mladenovatz. Before Varovnitza there lay 1,000 enemy dead; at Mouynitza he paid 2,000 casualties as the price of a defeat which threw him across the river Dout-

chinska, and here and elsewhere 41 officers and 2,000 men were taken prisoners.

In the face of this renewed repulse the Habsburg forces commenced to give way. On the left of the sector a certain number of columns made good their escape across the Koloubara and were pursued by the Drina Division (which was then transferred to the 3rd Army), and the main body retreated along the road leading from Lazarevatz to Stepoyevatz, where they arrived after having suffered heavy losses from the fire of the Serbian artillery. A brigade of cavalry was then despatched along the Belashnitsa River and northward towards Obrenovatz in order to prevent further passages of the Koloubara, the basic idea being to crowd the Austrians into the ever-narrowing triangle which had its apex at Beograd, where the conglomeration of transport would obviously mean heavy captures of material. Recognising the necessity of delay, the enemy made continual and desperate stands by rear-guard forces on favourable ground behind hastily thrown-up earthworks. Here and there attempts were even made to erect barbed-wire entanglements, but so great was the pressure exercised that the wire was often found in bundles unwound upon the ground. The fighting which ensued was, however, of a most determined character (General Jivkovitch described it as the most sanguinary of the campaign) and it was evident that the Austrians had determined to gain as much time as possible in which to complete their fortifications before Beograd and make a bid for the retention of the capital—a comparatively easy proposition for them, since they would be able to use their river monitors for the protection of their two flanks and bring up reinforcements from the army of occupation.

The order for the general pursuit in the direction of Beograd was issued on the evening of December 10th, on which day the Serbian forces were disposed as follows :

The 3rd Army (consisting of the Combined, Drina II, Timok II, and Independent Cavalry Divisions) was to advance by the road Stepoyevatz-Melyak.

The Shoumadia I and Timok I Divisions, the Detach-

ment of Obrenovatz, and the 3rd Ban troops belonging to the Detachment of Beograd, which were then concentrated on the Kosmaï sector, were placed under the command of Marshal Stepanovitch and given the mission to drive the enemy towards the capital along the road through Sibnitza-Barayevo-Tsiganski Koutche (360) and over the territory lying to its left.

The Detachment of Beograd (consisting of the Morava I Division and the 3rd Ban troops concentrated on the Varovnitza sector) was to proceed by the main Beograd road and over the terrain lying to its right, occupy Grodska, and maintain liaison with Marshal Stepanovitch's troops (the reorganised 2nd Army) on the left and the Detachment of Branitchevo (guarding the entrance to the Morava Valley) on the right.

Timok II (3rd Army) was ordered to proceed to occupy solidly Oub and Obrenovatz for the protection of the left flank of the movement, and, on the other hand, the Morava II Division was detached from the 1st Army and instructed to join the 3rd Army by crossing the Koloubara between Konatitza and Stepoyevatz.

The advance was timed to commence at 7 a.m. on December 11th.

The troops composing General Jivkovitch's Detachment of Beograd were, of course, less fatigued than those which had been englobed in the other armies; but, on the other hand, they were faced by strong enemy forces possessed of defensive positions which were remarkable for their natural strength. Indeed the mountains themselves were here (north of Ralya) tunnelled for the railway owing to the absence of any alternative route; and from this height (335) there ran eastward a formidable chain of crests of which Koviona (407)-390-Treshnia (302)-Lypa (272)-Strazha (292)-305-303-304-Kraikova bara (296) were the principal summits. The Austrians had posted cannon on the hills and hastily thrown up earthworks on the slopes, and, while it is true that much of this fortification was superficial, since the vigour of the pursuit had prevented any work of a permanent character, the line was very formidable and could not, as a whole, be outflanked.

The Detachment of Beograd early deployed for the attack, taking advantage of what little cover was provided by the ravines, and a fierce battle immediately developed, the Serbs progressing in two columns, the right against Strazha-Kraikova bara, and the left against Koviona. The height of Lypa was really the key position, for upon its tenure depended the fate of Koviona—a stronghold which commanded Ralya and all the approaches to and from that station, the capture of which would provide the Serbians with a valuable railhead. The tactics employed by General Jivkovitch in order to overcome the considerable difficulties which lay before him, involved a demonstration in force against Lypa, the while other troops assaulted Strazha with the object of turning the flank of the main position, the attack being continued at the same time over the rest of the line.

An initial success was registered more speedily than had been anticipated, for the onslaught upon Strazha was conducted with such energy that the Austrians turned tail and abandoned the mountain precipitately. The Serbs then began to deploy around Lypa; but they were too far ahead of the rest of their line and came under heavy shell-fire from height 305. This effectually checked progress for the time being. The next day (December 12th) the right wing continued the conflict on both sides of Strazha. The enemy put up a very stout defence, counter-attacking repeatedly, and the advantage swayed from one side to the other throughout the day and night. From Koviona to height 304, however, the Serbs succeeded in working up to within fifty yards of the Austrian line, and, at dawn on December 13th, the left column pronounced a frontal attack on Lypa itself with such *élan* that by 9.45 a.m. the position was carried. This loss exposed the hostile units on Koviona to combined fire from Lypa and Vis (418)—which had been stormed by the Timok I Division (2nd Army) on the previous day—with the result that this commanding summit was summarily abandoned by the defenders. The struggle for the possession of the main communications with Beograd had now been won. The enemy artillery

retreated at a gallop along the highway, followed by the infantry in a compact mass, the whole breaking into a disordered flight for Avala (a mountain fastness 18,645 ft. in height which dominates not only the roadway which winds up and down its foothills, but all the country lying south of the capital), the Serbs keeping on the heels of their adversary until they came under the fire of the batteries stationed on the western slopes of the mountain.

At 12.40 p.m., after energetic artillery preparation, the Serbian right column rushed to the assault of heights 305, 303, and 304, and swept on to them with tremendous enthusiasm, slaughtering many of the defenders and taking a considerable number of prisoners. Those who succeeded in making good their escape fled in panic along the ravines leading to Vrtchin.

In the meantime, on December 12th, while Timok I Division secured the summit of Vis (418), the Detachment of Obrenovatz, after a desperate conflict, succeeded in obtaining possession of the crest Paishouma-Talambas-243, taking 30 officers and 500 men prisoners. On the front of the 3rd Army the pressure exerted by the Drina I and Combined Divisions at length began to tell. After a morning of hard fighting the enemy gave way and were soon in flight on the road running northwards from Stepoyevatz. They were hotly pursued by the Drina, who occupied Borak at 3 p.m., when a brigade of cavalry was recalled urgently from Vreotsi to aid in the chase towards Melyak. Another Austrian column retreated in the direction of Konatitza-Zhouto brdo. The cavalry advanced by Konatitza towards M. Moshtanitza, while Timok II was busily engaged in driving hostile elements along the road from Obrenovatz to Shabatz.

The effect of the victory on the Lypa sector was now clearly evident. It had completely destroyed any idea which the Austrians might have cherished of retrieving the position; and the pursuit general set in on the whole front.

The two armies now entered a smaller triangle with its apex again at Beograd and its base now stretching from the mouth of the Koloubara to Grodska. The terrain encompassed therein was generally mountainous and very

favourable for defensive action ; but so rapid was the movement operated in the centre that by the evening of December 13th one column of the Timok I Division had passed around Avala, while the other got behind the Austrian rear-guard retiring from Koviona and rounded it up, together with a battalion of Chasseurs. The divisions passed the night on the positions of Pinosava. Simultaneously, Shoumadia I reached the line Taborishte-Orlovatz (219) astride the Topchidere River, and the Detachment of Obrenovatz came out at Tanki Vrt-Trenik.

The general direction of the 3rd Army lay between the rivers Topchidere and Sava. Drina II had pushed ahead with laudable rapidity, and by 5 p.m. was before the summit of Karaoula (320), where progress was checked by heavy gun-fire. The troops then deployed for the attack and took the position at the assault, turning forthwith against Petrovgrob, the chief defence of the Topchidere River. They approached this formidable obstacle at midnight in a torrential downpour, and for three hours and a half, a hand-to-hand struggle for supremacy was maintained. The Serbs had throughout shown great superiority in fighting under these conditions, and at 3.30 a.m. (December 14th) bombs and bayonets were employed with such effect that the coveted summit was reclaimed.

On the left wing of the front progress had been less rapid than Headquarters would have liked. Victory had now become a commonplace, and success was measured rather in captured guns and prisoners and speed of movement than in gains of territory. Thus it had been desired to hurry the Cavalry Division along the Sava Valley with the mission to cut communications between Beograd and Semlin at the earliest possible moment ; but the advance was considerably retarded by the accidental nature of the ground and the shell-fire from the hostile river monitors, which raked the Makish plain. Nevertheless, the Austrians were driven out of Moshtanitz and forced to fight their way north towards Jarkovo before nightfall.

As the enemy approached Beograd the strength of his resistance continually increased. Fresh troops of

the garrison were thrown into the fray, and the presence of superior officers served to stiffen still further the ranks. It was not, perhaps, that the Austrians viewed the prospect of holding the capital with any degree of optimism, but they had a glut of cannon, munitions, transport, and stores to get away, and every hour's delay meant the saving of much material. Thus they held on at times with unexpected and even foolhardy determination, fighting a series of very severe and costly rear-guard actions.

During the night of December 13th the Detachment of Beograd, in order to maintain contact with the opposing forces, despatched three strong flying columns : on the right by Lozovichka brdo (290) and Boletch, on the centre by Vrtchin and Kretchane, and on the left by Avala towards Torlak. A secondary object of this manœuvre was to prevent the enemy from fortifying himself on a line based on Avala and the Danube respectively, and, by permitting general outflanking movements, to neutralise Avala itself. The main body of the Detachment were permitted a little well-earned rest, and followed up later.

Although in this sector no great opposition was encountered at the outset, the Serbs were now fast approaching the last defences before Beograd, and it was to be expected that not only would they meet with serious resistance from every hill and village on their line of march, but that they would soon come within range of the Austrian siege-guns, which it was known had been set up on the positions south of the capital. As a matter of fact, immediately the right column got across the Boletchitza River on December 19th, it was subjected to heavy shelling from Strazhara (317), Erino brdo and Kloupe, and from monitors stationed off the mouth of the river. The centre column reached the Kretchane sector at noon, but was there held up while a battalion was sent forward via Zabran (208) to Dolovi (278), a summit of considerable tactical importance, which was captured at 2 p.m. after a sanguinary struggle. Zabran was forthwith occupied by a support of two battalions and a group of artillery ; a battery of howitzers was placed on

Zavoyitse (235)¹ and a battalion of infantry on Osoye (217),² the whole manœuvre being conceived with a view to assisting the left column (which was now coming up) in an attack on the enemy stronghold on Strazhara. In the afternoon a concerted attack was directed against Strazhara. A stubborn resistance was offered, but the Serbs were too near the end of their journey to be kept at bay, and they successfully stormed the hill during the evening.

Night saw no arrest of the action, and while the left and centre of the Detachment of Beograd fought their way steadily up to Ekmeklouk (279) (which they occupied at 8 a.m. on the 15th) the right column set off at midnight in march towards Erino brdo and Kloupe. Here they met with a strong rear-guard defence, due to the desire of the enemy to stay the advance while they were evacuating Beograd; but about 2 a.m. on December 15th the effort perceptibly weakened. At 3.30 a.m. these heights—which dominated Beograd from the south-east—were in Serbian hands, and six hours later patrols, belonging to the column entered the streets of the capital.

Meanwhile, on the 14th, the pursuit by the 2nd Army continued. In this sector the Austrians were holding naturally formidable and extensively fortified positions. Almost mid-way between the Sava and the Danube they were solidly entrenched on a triangle of heights Torlak (324)-Razboyichte (340)-Djurdjev grob (340), which dominated the main road to Beograd, and on the Topchidere River, whereby ran the railway, they held strong positions on Rakovitza-Yayintse. The intermediate country and the fall-down to the river Sava were covered by enemy artillery.

Of the several heights which overlook Beograd, that of Torlak perhaps possesses the most spectacular importance. From it there opens a vista stretching across the Sava and Danube until earth and sky meet on the fertile plains of Hungary, and in the foreground nestles the chief city of Serbia, but an hour's march distant over the rapidly descending road. Against the left of this sector the Shoumadia I advanced, and at 10 a.m. the important summit of

¹ About two miles north-west of Kretchane.

² About three miles north-west of Kretchane.

Strazhevitza (214) fell to the division, upon which artillery was hurried up and heavy fire poured upon the hostile positions of Knezhevatz Kretchane in order to assist the attack on that point by Drina I. Simultaneously a fierce conflict raged around Rakovitza, where the Austrians had established a depot of munitions and had heavily fortified themselves. The fighting was mostly at close quarters, but Serb superiority at length gained the day, and the enemy was driven out.

A halt was now made while further supplies of ammunition were brought up, during which time the right of the Shoumadia I Division was concentrated at Sedliak ¹ in order to assist the Timok I, who had been creeping up to the Torlak triangle, and now proceeded to deploy for the attack. The whole morning had been occupied by these manœuvres, for the terrain offered the enemy an uninterrupted field of fire; but the infantry made the most of what little cover was available, and a considerable weight of artillery, including a section of 15 cm. howitzers, having been pushed up to effective range, the action was developed from the south-west and south-east respectively. Though the Austrians were here in strength of five regiments and supported by a mass of artillery, they were now in no fit moral condition to stand fast themselves under heavy shell-fire. The Serbian guns effectively broke the back of the opposition, and when, about 2.30 p.m., the infantry went forward in open formation, the enemy abandoned their foremost trenches and ran towards the Serbian lines fluttering their dirty handkerchiefs in sign of surrender. Although severe losses were occasioned, progress was thenceforth rapid, and by 4 p.m. all three positions had been taken at the point of the bayonet.

On the Serbian left the 3rd Army followed up the retreating Austrians along the roads Petrovgrob-hill 208 and Jelesnik-Banovo brdo. Both these routes were under fire, the former from Torlak and the latter from the monitors on the Sava, and no sooner had the Serbians driven their adversary off hill 208, than a deluge of shell was poured on the summit and its environs.

¹ Five miles south-west of Rakovitza.

The enemy, taking full advantage of the cover presented by the wooded country lying between Jarkovo and Yayintse, were now found to have organised a strong resistance on a salient formed by the fringes of Koshoutniak forest¹ - Knezhevatz Kretchane - Strazhevitza (214) - Yayintze-Maïour, and on the morning of the 14th the 3rd Army set out upon its last serious engagement. The Combined Division approached Jarkovo and the Koshoutniak forest from the direction of Jelesnik and Petlovo brdo respectively, and one regiment of Drina II proceeded against Knezhevatz Kretchane. The reserve of Drina II remained at Orlovatz (219). These units were assisted by a cavalry brigade and by the Shoumadia I Division, which, after rendering the necessary assistance to Timok I against Torlak, had moved north-westward and came out before Strazhevitza (214).

Outflanking tactics were employed by the two wings (the left column of the Combined striking north of Kretchane and the right column of Shoumadia working round towards Maïour), while the rest of the forces operated a frontal attack. Despite the advantages afforded them by the terrain and the support of the heavy artillery on Banovo brdo, the Austrians put up a poor show. Elements of the Combined Division were soon in Jarkovo, Kretchane was hurriedly abandoned at 3 p.m., Maïour fell to the Shoumadia shortly afterwards, and by 4.50 p.m. the Serbian batteries had commenced to pour a devastating fire upon the enemy who were hiding in the Koshoutniak forest.¹ The only check received was that administered to the brigade of cavalry on the extreme left which, in endeavouring to work along the marshy plain of Makish to the bridges in order to cut off the Austrian retreat, found its passage effectually barred by a barrage put up by hostile guns on Topchidere and two monitors stationed in the river.

There appears, indeed, to have been considerable confusion of thought in the Austrian command at this juncture. Telephone messages tapped at Kievo provided evidence of serious differences of opinion, the Beograd command insisting upon a continuance of the resistance,

¹ Running north to south from Banovo to Kretchane.

while, for the most part, the leaders in the field favoured flight and declined to accept any responsibility for the consequences of further fighting. Finally, orders were given for the withdrawal into Hungary, with instructions to destroy, or throw into the Sava, the impedimenta it might be found impossible to save. By the close of day the Austrians were back on to the heights before Beograd, animated by no ambition but to put the river between themselves and the Serbs before the morrow's dawn should imperil the safety of the closing stage of the great retreat.

The invaders had commenced the re-passage of the Sava on the morning of December 14th. Throughout the day, as the news from Torlak became more and more serious, the movement developed into a wild rush for the other shore, and the pontoons became choked with transport. Cannon were unlimbered and thrown into the river, and the troops fought amongst themselves for precedence. All through the night the panic-stricken retreat continued, and when, in the early hours of the next day, three of the pontoons were splintered by Serbian shells, a stream of fugitives stretched from the bridge away down the road towards Obrenovatz. In the streets of Beograd the Austrians left five cannon, eight ammunition-wagons, 1,000 horses, and 400 transport wagons—many of the latter filled with loot from the city. Some 150 junior officers and 10,000 men likewise found their escape thus cut off; but amongst these captives there were few of high rank, for the army chiefs had been the first to leave. In the officers' mess lay the evening meal of the 14th—the soup half consumed, the wine half drunk.

The first Serbian troops to enter Beograd consisted of a cavalry detachment from the 2nd Army, which rode in at 7 a.m. followed shortly afterwards by the infantry of the Detachment of Beograd from Ekmeklouk. They were met at the outskirts of the city by a crowd of poor women and children, who, with few exceptions, were the only inhabitants who had remained. These joyous souls, themselves dependent on a mere pittance received from the municipality and which had ceased with the

evacuation, brought their all. They had quickly collected masses of chrysanthemums, with which they bombarded and decorated the incoming heroes until they marched over a veritable pathway of flowers. The maidens brought the embroidered scarves and sashes which they had worked in preparation for marriage, and these they hung about the cavaliers until the men looked like so many *garçons d'honneur* at a Serbian village wedding.

All this while fierce street fighting was taking place down by the river, principally with enemy forces of Hungarian nationality. The majority were killed, some surrendered, and the rest threw themselves into the water in an attempt, often fatal in its result, to reach the other shore. Simultaneously, incidents of a more peaceful and pleasing description were being enacted in the city. King Peter had entered his capital close on the heels of the cavalry. He stayed to trample under-foot a Hungarian flag freshly hauled down from his Palace, and then, joined by the Crown Prince Alexander, Prince George, and Lieut.-Colonel Harrison, the British Military Attaché, proceeded to a hastily arranged Te Deum at the Cathedral to render thanks to Almighty God for the miraculous success of Serbian arms.

Of the Austrian Army of 300,000 men which crossed the Drina and the Sava rivers, certainly not more than 200,000 returned; 323 officers and 41,215 men were taken prisoners, approximately 60,000 were killed or wounded, and the booty left behind, as far as it was tabulated (and much was overlooked in the stress of the pursuit), was as follows :

Cannon . . .	133	Horses . . .	2,208
Machine-guns . .	71	Machine-gun teams . .	6
Rifles (approximately)	10,000	Pack-horses . . .	29
Gun-carriages . .	29	Oxen . . .	1,078
Ammunition-wagons . .	386	Portable field-ovens . .	52
Transport-wagons . .	3,249	Motor-cars . . .	5
Transport-wagons (Engineers) . . .	22	Pack-saddles . . .	184
Ambulances . . .	37	Cases of 12 gun shells . .	106
Aeroplanes . . .	2	Sacks of cereals . . .	525
		Military bands (complete)	2

Though there were successes more vast, it is doubtful whether any had more important bearing upon the im-

mediate progress of the great war. Koumanovo, Bitolye (Monastir), and the Yadar had already done much to establish the martial prestige of the Serbs, but the victory of the Koloubara constituted one of the finest deeds in military history, and is unique in its example of the manner in which an army, ill-equipped and without reserves, was able, notwithstanding the absence of material and the fatigue of unceasing work in the trenches, and with almost certain defeat staring it in the face, to rise up and snatch a brilliant and decisive victory out of a menacing and disastrous situation.

The presence of the King in the firing-line, the strategy of the Staff, the arrival of gun-ammunition, and the leadership of Mishitch,¹ all contributed to the glorious result of this great battle; but the chief honour must be accorded to the gallant Serbian soldiers, who, worn out by years of warfare, suffering from hardships unheard of in other armies and demoralised by weeks of defeat, rose up with renewed courage at their country's call and, with unsurpassed valour and *élan*, drove the well-armed and disciplined armies of the Habsburgs beyond their frontiers in utter rout.

Once the tide of victory turned in favour of the Serbians very little news was vouchsafed to the public of the Central Empires, but on December 24th General Potiorek, the Austrian Commander, was retired for the usual reason of ill-health, and on the same day the official *Korrespondenz Bureau* issued the following ludicrous explanation of the *débâcle* :

“ VIENNA, 24th,
“ *Official.*

“ The retirement of our forces after their victorious offensive in Serbia has given birth to divers rumours for the most part entirely without foundation. Here is the explanation, based on an investigation which was immediately made by the order of the Emperor by a military personage of high rank enjoying entire confi-

¹ General Mishitch was created a Field-Marshal on the battle-field in reward for the magnificent achievement of the 1st Army under his command.

dence. After the success which was obtained by the fight, the High Command of the Balkan forces considered that the ideal objective of all war is to completely destroy the adversary ; but they did not pay sufficient attention to the difficulties which would have to be surmounted as a result of inclement weather. The lines of *ravitaillement* running through an inhospitable country, were in such a state that it was impossible to bring up to the army the necessary food and ammunition. As the enemy had, at the same time, brought up reinforcements and passed to the attack, the offensive had to be suspended, and it was considered prudent not to engage the army in decisive combat under unfavourable conditions. They have retired, but they are not beaten, and await a renewal of the combat with unshakable courage. Those who have seen our brave troops after this fatiguing retreat have been obliged to recognise their great valour. It was inevitable that we should have important losses in men and material during this retreat ; but it is the fact, however, that the statement of the amount of these losses has been very much exaggerated."

CHAPTER VIII

THE STORY OF BEOGRAD

THE better to preserve an approximate chronological exactitude in the recital of the Austro-Serbian campaigns, it will be advantageous to take, as an epoch in the military history of Beograd, that period which began at 1 a.m. on July 29th, 1914, when a detachment of irregulars drove off a river steamer and two troop-laden barges which attempted to approach the Serbian shore, and ended on the morning of December 15th of the same year with the entry of King Peter and his victorious army into the capital. During these momentous four and a half months the city and its inhabitants tasted all the varied experiences of modern warfare. The thunder of cannon and the screaming of shells first startled and then coldly interested them; attacks and counter-attacks on river islands degenerated from an excitement to a commonplace; ruined edifices, wrecked houses, and slaughtered civilians became an unmarked portion of their every-day life. In quick succession they passed through the varied emotions occasioned by the evacuation of the Serbian troops and the inglorious entry of unopposed Austrians with their flaunting flags and blaring bands; they saw their women and children taken in hostage and their citizens hanged, their houses looted and their homes despoiled; and then, to the music of booming guns and crackling rifles, they watched the hostile rabble fight its way back across the Sava, until, in delirious joy, they went without the city walls and cheered the Serbian victors of the most remarkable battle in Balkan history.

For the greater part of the period under discussion,

Austrian cannon on land and river poured shell, shrapnel, and incendiary bombs into an undefended town with intent to destroy the evidences of state, civilisation, and culture which had there been erected during the hundred odd years of Serbian independence. If, up till the outbreak of the European War, Beograd had been the least imposing of the Balkan capitals, it was, nevertheless, justly typical of the progress of its own people. Whereas a German monarch with Teuton ideas and a coterie of experienced advisers was imported into Roumania, and a Coburg Prince carried a veneer of Western culture into Sofia, and while a scion of the house of Denmark laid the foundations of modern Greece, Serbia chose as her rulers the leaders of humble origin who, by their bravery and prowess, had led her to freedom from the Turkish thrall, and strove, unaided and uninfluenced from without, to create a kingdom and a nation from within herself.

The butt, now of Austrian and then of Russian intrigue, little known of Europe, left to work out their own salvation by their own devices, living a life of communal contentment in their rural "Zadruga," the Serbs had handed down the mingled fact and fiction of long-dead heroes from mother to son, imbibed their inspiration at the shrine of their great Emperor, Doushan, and clung steadfastly to a simple faith in the ultimate liberation of the Southern Slav peoples and their union into one homogeneous whole which should reincarnate the glories of the ancient Serbian Empire.

The history of the Serbian renaissance lay hidden in the target against which the Austrian batteries turned their guns. Cheek by jowl with the imposing Palace next the wood-paved Teratsia along which ran electric cars, lay the ramshackle little cottage of the first Prince Milan, abutting on a narrow cobbled street up which jolted crude oxen-wagons. Next the picturesque, old-fashioned market-place of the peasantry, rose the Beograd University—the embodiment of the light and learning of modern Serbia. The rude carts of the poor and the gilded coaches of the State, the humble bazaars of the people and the Vienna-laden emporiums of the rich, the odoriferous cafés of the masses and the luxurious saloons of the

classes, all were within a few days of the outbreak of hostilities, damaged by Austrian shell.

Both the city and environs of Beograd were devoid of permanent defensive works, and no effort was, in fact, made to protect the capital itself. What military precautions were undertaken were directed against any attempted passage of the rivers Sava and Danube, and, for this reason also, the two Tsiganlia (Gypsy) Islands, situate to the west of the railway bridge, continued to enjoy a very considerable measure of importance. With the exception of the troops engaged in the occasional expeditions against Bizania and those stationed sometimes in and sometimes against Tsiganlia, the infantry played little part in the work of defence. But a frequent use was made of artillery. Surrounded as he was by a series of dominating heights of great strategic value, General Jivkovitch (Commander of the "Detachment of Beograd") had a plethora of excellent gun positions at his disposition, and he moved his batteries from one to the other as the exigencies of the ever-changing situation required. Banovo brdo, to the south-west, and Topchider and Dedign to the south were, however, outstanding summits upon which cannon were more or less permanently installed, and it was from these points that an almost continuous artillery duel was fought with the Austrian gunners on Bizania.

The bombardment of Beograd will rank as one of those inexcusable acts of vandalism which disgraced the European War. It was unprovoked, it served no military purpose whatsoever, and could have had for its object only the wanton destruction of private and State property. During the first two months the city was under fire for thirty-six days and thirty-six nights. In this period 700 buildings were struck by bombs, shell, or shrapnel, and of these but sixty were the property of the State. Nothing was sacred. The old, unarmed fortress, with its memories of the Turkish occupation; the University where centred Serbian culture; the riverside factories which represented her industrial progress; the museums which housed priceless relics of Rome and Macedon; even Foreign Legations, hospitals, and pharmacies—all

suffered in the lust for revenge. The cigarette factory belonging to the State Monopoly was wrecked by shell and fired by grenades, tobacco and machinery to the value of £320,000 being destroyed in the flames. The foundries, bakeries, and all the factories along the Serbian shore of the river Sava were razed to the ground. The King's Palace bore little evidence of external injury; but Austrian howitzers rained shells through the roof until little remained of the once gorgeous interior. The University was riddled with shell until the building, with its class-rooms, laboratories, libraries, and workshops, was entirely demolished. Even the cellars were destroyed by great shells which broke down the walls, pierced their way into the very bowels of the earth and there exploded. In an ineffectual attempt to destroy the State and other banks, one street running from the water's edge was ripped up from end to end. In the Turkish fortress the old historic walls were sadly battered and the military museum and one or two class-rooms slightly damaged.

Shops and private houses lying in the centre of the city suffered to an appalling extent. In some cases upper stories were entirely carried away. In others the façades were blown in until the passer-by was presented with the picturesque but tragic tableau of an unwallled interior. At the east end of the city house after house was literally disembowelled. The British Legation was struck on several occasions, the Russian Legation received a shot which blew a great aperture in its eastern gable, while even the Austrian Consulate failed to escape damage.

Though the greater part of Beograd's population fled the city with the Government, there remained many too poor, or, for divers reasons unable, to move. It was inevitable, therefore, that a certain loss of life should have been occasioned. Most of the victims were quietly sitting in their own homes when shells fell and buried their dead or maimed bodies in the débris of the shattered walls. More intrepid spirits were in the streets when an unexpected missile laid them low. Yet others were foully murdered, for Austrian sharpshooters were placed

in positions covering certain exposed streets, whence they wantonly fired upon passing civilians. The casualties resulting from the actual bombardment would have been lower if the Austrians had not broken through yet another military convention. Had the object been the simple destruction of the town of Beograd, that could have been the better attained by the exclusive use of explosive shell. Yet, in innumerable instances, death-dealing shrapnel was employed. It would appear, indeed, that the sacrifice of civilian life was deliberately aimed at, for although, up to the end of September, 25 civilians were killed and 126 wounded, the loss among the military was confined to a few gendarmes on police duty.

While the Serbian gunners met with a certain measure of success in their operations against the hostile land artillery, they possessed no armour-piercing shell, and consequently were unable to make any impression upon the Austrian monitors, which regularly emerged from their hiding-places on the Danube behind Semlin and proceeded to bombard Beograd with impunity. Attention has been called in preceding chapters to the serious inconvenience caused by the monitors on the upper reaches of the Sava. There, as at Beograd, they played a conspicuous part in the operations of the Austrian armies and proved an almost insurmountable obstacle to the development of certain strategical movements which, but for their presence, would have been undertaken by the Serbian Staff. For one reason or another all the measures to which reference has been made in the chapter on "Siege Warfare" failed to put an end to the objectionable attentions of the Habsburg warships, and it became evident that some more efficacious means would be necessary if the activities of these unwelcome pests were to be restricted, if not entirely suppressed. On October 6th it was put before Marshal Poutnik that the situation called for the presence of a British Naval officer versed in the usage of mines and torpedoes. This suggestion was shortly afterwards acted upon, and, the British Admiralty having demonstrated a most laudable disposition to assist, Commander Hubert Cardale,

R.N., reached Serbia at the beginning of November. Commander Cardale had no equipment save his brains and a Serbian uniform, and only one service assistant in Petty Officer Prince; but, on November 5th, a French Naval Detachment, to which reference has already been made, and which consisted of Commander Picot with 7 officers and 100 men and 3-14 cm. guns, also reached the capital.

Two of the French guns were mounted on concrete emplacements at Karabournoun at a point about 10,000 yards from the anchorage of the monitors. The work of installation could only be carried on during the night; but by November 21st they were ready for action. Plans were laid to take the monitors by surprise, the idea being to lure the boats down the river and attack them by shell-fire, and, if they ventured near enough, by torpedoes from additional floating tubes which had been placed in the Danube opposite Nova Botsha. Unfortunately, a thick fog obscured the monitors on the day in question, and it was not until 1.45 p.m. that operations commenced. Some difficulty was experienced in finding the range, the first series falling short, but eventually the shells began to drop around the ships and a direct hit was registered on one of the turrets. At 2 p.m. the enemy craft steamed out of range; an hour later they came down to within 8,000 yards of the French battery in order to assist their guns on Bizania, which had kept up a well-nourished though ineffective fire throughout the proceedings. This manœuvre was repeated on three occasions, on the last of which one monitor was struck amidships and steamed off with a list to port. The French were given no further opportunity to demonstrate the efficacy of their marksmanship until the night of November 29th, when the order was received to evacuate Beograd, and the stock of shell was expended with results which have already been reported. The two guns which had been mounted were necessarily abandoned, while the third (in reserve) was transported from Ralya to Nish.

Meanwhile, Commander Cardale had set himself to solve the problem of mining the waters. This was a task of no mean difficulty. The river was subject to heavy

fluctuations—there was sometimes a variation of two to three yards in its depth during a single week—and, since the draft of the monitors was approximately 1·40 metres, mechanical mines were subject to serious limitations. Such instruments might, under these circumstances, be effective one day and ineffective the next, and it did, indeed, so happen on many occasions that the boats passed over without hitting them. With the exception of a few floating tubes, however, mechanical mines were the only defensive material presently available, and the river was, accordingly, thoroughly sown at all essential points.

Yet, however questionable might be the scientific utility of these weapons, they exercised a moral effect of undoubted value. Not only did they bring about a cessation of the attacks on Beograd, but the Austrians were forthwith deprived of the assistance of their craft in their operations against the Serbian shores. While in the early stages of the war every hostile invasion was covered by monitors, we find that they dared not venture down to support the crossing at Smederevo on November 9th—a diversion which, it will be remembered, ended disastrously—and the presence of these engines probably spared Beograd itself from attack during the early days of the Third Invasion.

But Commander Cardale was not content with mere defensive measures. He believed in offensive tactics, and with this intent cast around for a boat which could carry torpedo tubes and a dropping-gear, his object being to beard the monitors in their own waters. Unhappily, his choice was restricted to a few small motor-boats, quite useless for the purpose, and an old 30-ton tug with a speed of seven knots. In the absence of a better alternative, he decided to employ this latter, and, with the assistance of Mr. Prince and a gang of Serbian engineers, rigged up an improvised dropping-gear. The work was completed on November 26th, and the intrepid spirits engaged in the undertaking then awaited a dark night for their enterprise. This longed-for occasion arrived three nights later, but, following on a previous warning, telegraphic instructions were simultaneously re-

ceived from Kragouyevatz to evacuate Beograd. There was no time to be lost if anything was to be saved. The dropping-gear was buried on Tsiganlia Island, and the tug was sunk in the river ; the railway bridge was then blown up, and the Allied Missions forthwith set out upon their hazardous retreat. The last train departed from Topchider station at 7 o'clock on the morning of November 30th.

The Austrian occupation of Beograd during the Third Invasion lasted for fourteen days (December 1st to 14th) and even in the retrospect had something of the unfinished about it. General Franck's forces entered with a great display of bunting, and while two divisions of men were placed in and around the city and the officers gave themselves up to music and feasting, the commissariat and hospital arrangements were left in a pitiable state of chaos. Even at this epoch, when easy victory over the Serbians seemed beyond doubt, the Austrian authorities manifested that same indifference to the welfare of their soldiery as had been so painfully apparent at Valyevo. Their medical service was hopelessly disorganised. With the army of occupation came 800 wounded from other theatres. They had spent many days on the road, racked with pain and unattended, and, on arrival at Beograd, they were unloaded upon the small American Red Cross unit already burdened with the charge of 1,200 maimed Serbians. Day by day, further batches of dirty, neglected Austrian warriors, their sufferings augmented by hunger and inattention, were deposited in the American Hospital, until it sheltered nearly 3,000 patients. Although the Staff strove heroically to cope with the avalanche which thus suddenly descended upon them, they received no assistance from the Austrian doctors, who were manifestly incompetent or unwilling either to install hospitals of their own or to assist the over-wrought little band of American surgeons and nurses. Up in the town the Staffs were banqueting and celebrating their "victory" in a debauch of wine ; down in the hospital the wounded starved, until Dr. Ryan—the energetic

head of the Mission—took a brougham and forcibly commandeered 400 loaves from a military bakery.

Under the guidance of their late military *attaché* in Serbia, the Austrians established themselves in the best available buildings, commenced to repair the roads which they had themselves ripped open by shell-fire, and set up a pretence of city administration. On the Torlak hills solid earthworks protected by barbed wire entanglements were constructed, and concrete foundations were prepared for the big guns. Yet they had scarcely time to decide what they would do with Beograd before the Serbian hosts swooped down and drove them back helter-skelter across the Sava. Thus the good and evil which was the city's lot depended largely upon individual benevolence or malice. Two currents—the one respect for civilians and the other the product of Prussian example—ran side by side. The buildings occupied by one military authority remained cleanly and intact, even King Peter's photograph being left undamaged; in others filth was everywhere, furniture destroyed, and the royal image shot and slashed to ribbons. Entire sections of the town escaped pillage; other quarters were pitilessly looted from end to end. While the Cathedral and various other churches were not seriously damaged, the General Post Office was completely wrecked. All the furniture in the Parliament House was destroyed and broken, and the Royal Palace was officially stripped from floor to ceiling and the contents carted off to Hungary in furniture-vans brought specially from Semlin for the purpose.

And when the evacuation commenced the Austrians took, not their own people, but the wounded Serbians, whom they transported into Austria to swell the numbers of their prisoners of war. Several hundred natives of Beograd—the exact number will probably never be established—were led captive into Austria-Hungary. A few of these were males, including a boy of nine years of age, and an old man, deaf and dumb; the rest were women and girls.

It was the fortune of Commander Cardale, who re-

protected by iron plates. This accomplished, the craft was manned by troops, towed round to the northern shore after dark, and then allowed to drift into mid-stream by the simple process of easing away wire ropes. Thus the barge was manœuvred into a position some fifty yards from the western end of the small island, where she dropped two anchors.

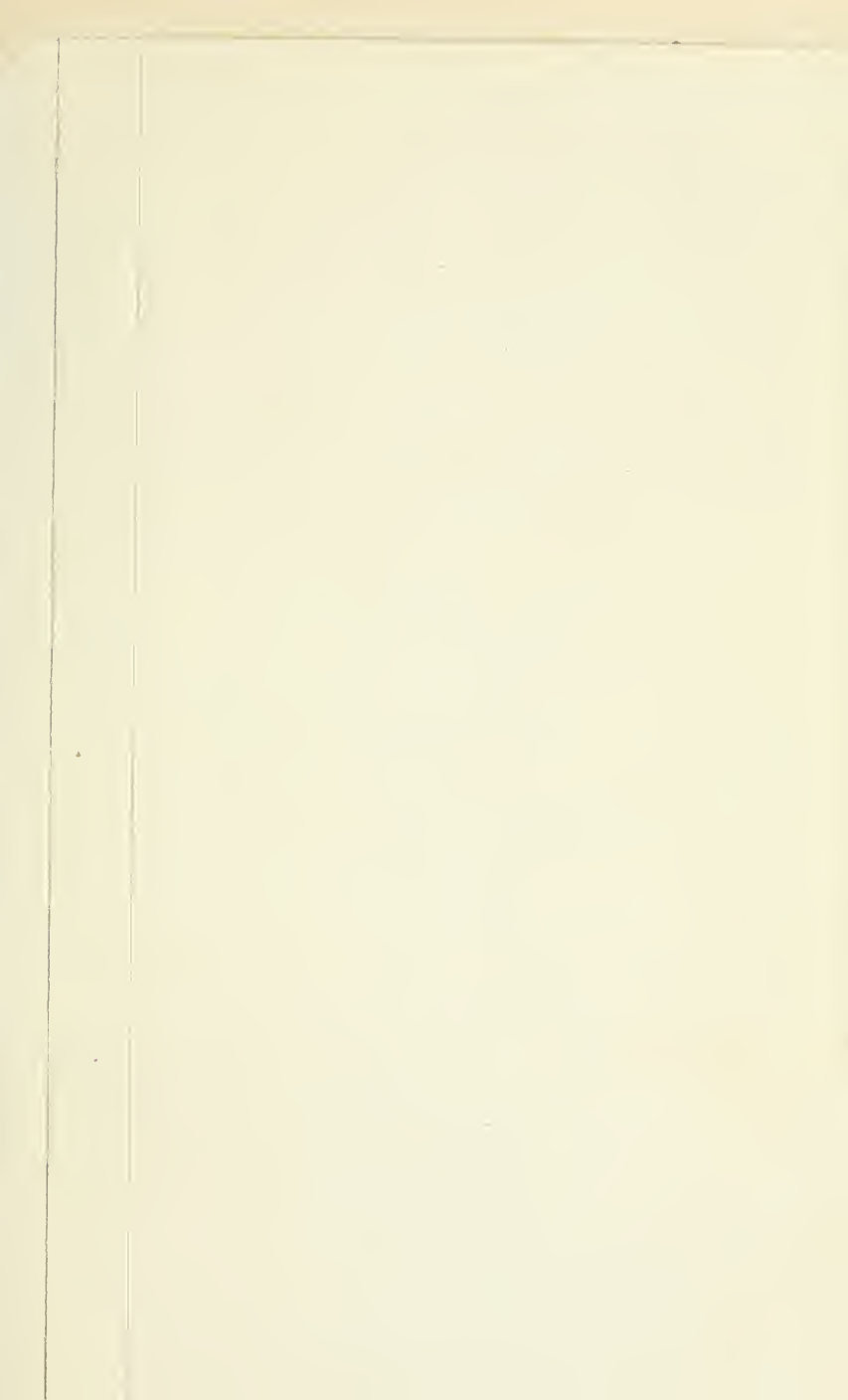
The effect upon the Austrian garrison was unique. Ignorant of the fact that the Serbians possessed a battleship, they left their trenches and gathered on the shore, crying "Monitor! Monitor!" Disillusionment came swift and sudden. The two machine-guns and all the rifles that could be brought to bear spat out bullets at the exposed enemy; and, amid the inevitable panic which ensued, a number of small boats containing infantry, which had been in hiding on the offside of the spurious monitor, darted round and effected a landing.

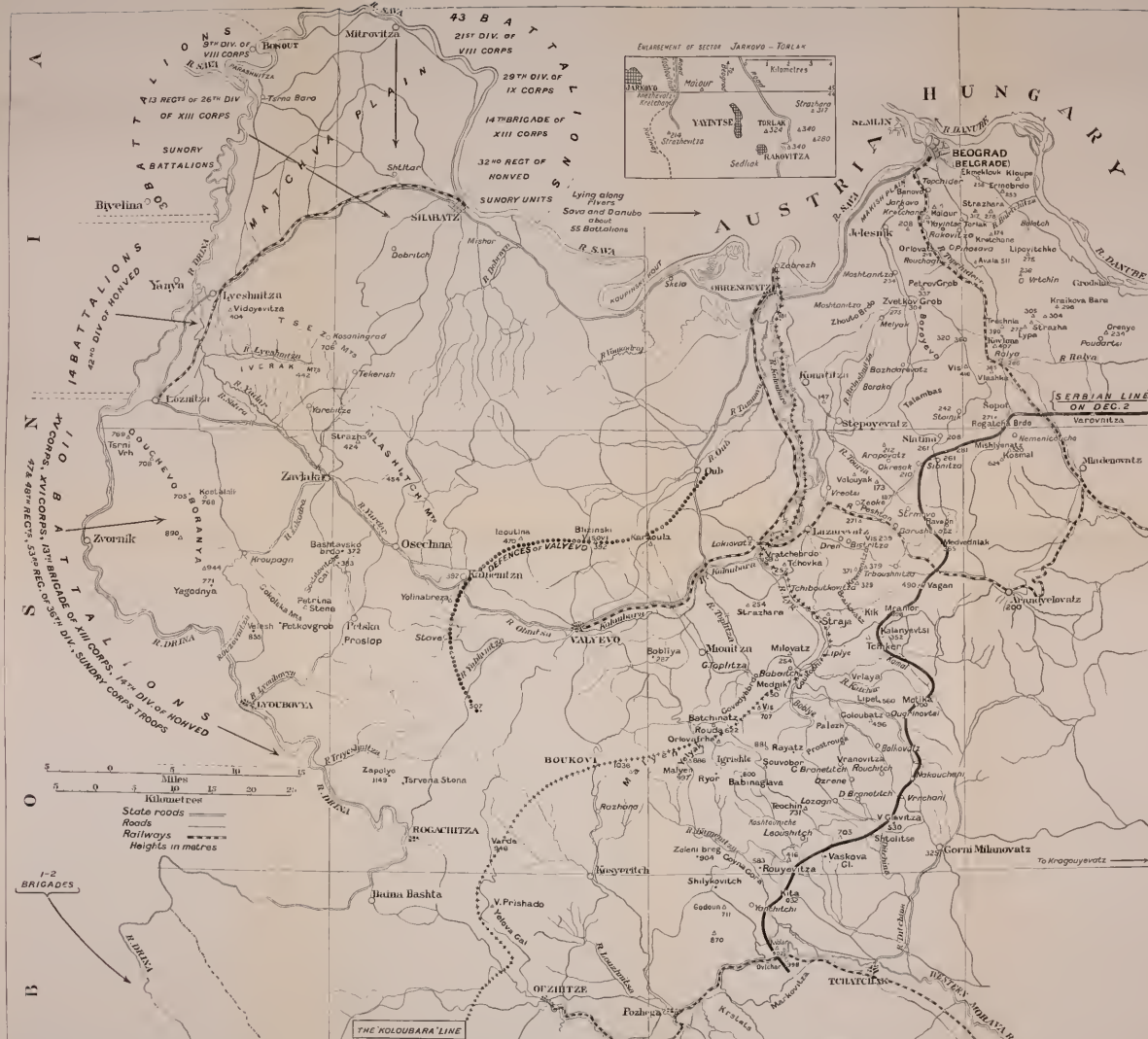
The Austrians offered little or no resistance, and before the Serbs were well ashore the survivors were in full flight for Hungary. This move, however, had likewise been foreseen, and as the Habsburgers left the sheltered pontoon bridge connecting with the mainland they were caught in a heavy artillery barrage. Few escaped annihilation or capture, and for long afterwards Serbia was left in possession of this little tract of enemy territory.

Thus ended the Third Invasion of Serbia. Had the opportunities provided by this staggering blow at the fortunes of the House of Habsburg been efficiently exploited by the Allies, the Koloubara might well have proved the tomb of German ambition. The Serbs had shattered—it might have been for all time—the Teutonic scheme of linking up with Turkey and dragging in a willing Bulgaria in the process, and opened up possibilities for the early intervention of Roumania and Greece. They had paved the way for the great Russian offensive in Galicia in the spring of 1915—an event which fell within an ace of success—and rendered possible the brilliantly conceived but disastrously executed Anglo-French attack upon the Dardanelles. The Allies failed to profit by the opportunities thus provided, and the

cherished prospects of a speedier peace were thrown to the winds ; but Serbia, which, in an epic of imperishable heroism, had surmounted difficulties that would have crushed a people less devoted to the national ideal, stood steadfast in her own duty to the common cause, and for nearly a year afterwards continued to cast a gloom over the dream of Pan-German world hegemony.

END OF VOL. I





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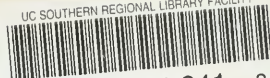
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